

☾ In the ongoing battle of Danzig vs. The Misfits, Jerry Only is now countersuing Danzig over the lawsuit he initially filed over the trademark of the band's name and licensing deals. Only has taken issue with Danzig's lawsuit citing a number of reasons, including the amount of time it took for him to file the lawsuit, Danzig's

meagre interest in the trademarks in the first place and insufficient evidence to back up the complaints.



☾ An online campaign has been launched calling on the Swedish metal band Ghost B.C. to split. The campaign, started by angry metal fan Sven Armdacht, claims Ghost B.C. are creators of “awful poser music” that is ruining metal. Armdacht hopes the petition will gain 10,000 signatures which will cause the band and their management to disband. Currently the petition stands with 1300 signatures.

☾ A North American live action movie of Tsugumi Ohba and Takeshi Obata's *Death Note* has been speculated for years, and it is now rumoured that Gus Van Sant will direct. *Death Note* tells the story of a student who discovers a notebook that gives him the power to kill anyone whose face and name he knows. Two films based directly on the manga were made in Japan in 2006. A musical adaptation is also in the works and set to tour Japan and South Korea in 2015.

☾ According to *The Atlantic* magazine, Iraq's first female-fronted black metal band, Janaza (Arabic for "funeral") and its demo, "Burn the Pages of the Quran," are "repurposing black metal's historically anti-Christian ferocity to rail against Islam." Vocalist Anahita is quoted as saying that black metal has helped her cope with the death of family members to a suicide bomber and that if she was outed from beneath the corpsepaint, she and all of her friends would face beheading. Metal fans have offered up evidence that photos of the 28-year-old singer were actually lifted from a photo project called "Black Metal Barbie," however, and that the image of another member of Janaza was nicked from Norwegian band Vulture Lord.

☾ The end is near for Bray Film Studios, the Berkshire, England, site where *Alien* and dozens of classic Hammer horror films, including *The Curse of Frankenstein* (1957) and *Dracula: Prince of Darkness* (1966), were shot. In July, an East Sussex architectural firm was granted permission to return Down Place, a building that once housed the studio's offices and catering unit, to its original state as a residential-use manor house. Other related buildings will be destroyed to make way for seven "eco-houses" and a media centre.

☾ Earlier this summer, Scottish law enforcement reported a flurry of emails in which recipients were told they had won the opportunity to appear as extras in *Wood Evil*, a horror film set to shoot in Inchnacardoch Forest in the Highlands, provided they each coughed up a £60 deposit (approximately \$94 US). Scottish tourism agency VisitScotland first alerted police, who've since informed the public that, "Film companies would not ask for money from a potential extra."

☾ TV chef Anthony Bourdain, whose claims to fame include eating everything from sheep 'nads to warthog rectums, recently published his first graphic novel, the blood-spattered *Get Jiro*, with the help of co-writer/friend Joel Rose and artist Langdon Foss. The Vertigo book follows a violent sushi chef who uses a Samurai sword to behead customers who fail to pay his food the proper respect. An aspiring comic book artist in his teen years, Bourdain says his inspiration was EC-style horror comics of the 1950s.

☾ A Swedish homeowner obsessed with the 1987 movie *Predator* caused a stir after putting his house on the market with pictures displaying his *Predator*-themed decor. The house has Predator heads mounted on walls, giant Predator replica statues, and a home theatre room designed like the Predator spaceship. At the time of this writing, the house was listed at \$321,281 USD.

☾ Guillermo del Toro has signed up to voice a role in an animated anthology of Edgar Allan Poe stories, directed by Raul Garcia. *Extraordinary Tales* will also feature the voices of Christopher Lee, Julian Sands and Roger Corman. The animation will be comprised of five segments. Del Toro is lending his voice to *The Pit and the Pendulum* segment.



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4,000-year-old red deer skull and antlers found in Borth - BBC News

bbc.com

**4,000-year-old red deer skull and antlers found in Borth**

- 28 April 2016



4,000-year-old deer skull and antlers

Image copyright University of Wales Trinity Saint David

The skull and antlers of a deer dating back 4,000 years have been found.

Researchers from the University of Wales Trinity Saint David are examining the red deer remains, discovered on a beach in Borth, Ceredigion.

They were first spotted in early April, but were not recovered until Friday due to the tides.

Dr Ros Coard, from the university, said: "The individual was certainly in the prime of his life showing full development of the large antlers."

When the skull was first seen, it was reported to the Royal Commission in Aberystwyth which alerted Dr Martin Bates, of UWTSD's school of archaeology, history and anthropology.

The people who found it photographed the area where it was spotted and this was used by the team who manually searched the water at low tide until the skull was found under 1m (3.2ft) of water.

'Wonderful discovery'

This discovery comes from a channel cut through an area which in the 1960s turned up bones of a large auroch, an extinct form of large wild cattle that once lived in Europe.

The forest and peat deposits either side of this channel date to between about 6,000 and 4,000 years ago - the time of the last hunter gatherers and the earliest farmers in Britain.

Dr Bates said: "This is a wonderful discovery that really brings the forest and its environs to light.

"Although the exact age of the skull has yet to be confirmed, it's probable that the channel within which the find was made is contemporary with the forest and so an age in excess of 4,000 years old is likely."

Dr Coard, a faunal specialist at UWTSD, added: "Although the antlers and partial skull still have to undergo full analysis, the antlers can be said to come from a very large, mature male red deer."

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Divers Find 400-Year-Old Silk Dress in Dutch Shipwreck

msn.com

<http://www.msn.com/en-us/news/offbeat/divers-find-400-year-old-silk-dress-in-dutch-shipwreck/ar-BBs0RqE>
April 20th 2016

Kate Horowitz 18 hrs ago



old gown - Provided by Mental Floss



Provided by Mental Floss

For those of you who don't speak Dutch, here's the deal: Divers in the Wadden Sea found a fancy 17th-century gown partially buried in the sand. The gown is astonishingly well-preserved, given the circumstances, and may be one of the most important artifacts ever brought up from the sea floor.

The dress was recovered off the Dutch island of Texel, which was, for a time, an important center of trade. Unfortunately for traders, Texel's location also made it a prime site for shipwrecks. As Livius at The History Blog explains, "Ships anchored in the Texel roadstead, a sheltered area in the lee of the island, waiting for propitious winds, waiting out bad

weather or taking on crew and cargo, only to be wrecked in sudden unexpected storms."

Many of those wrecks have since been washed further out to sea, but some remain in the relative shallows surrounding the island. Divers generally avoid disturbing them, instead waiting for the ocean to reveal the rotting wrecks. Two years ago, the currents uncovered a historical (not literal) gold mine: the remains of a well appointed merchant vessel from the 1600s. The ship had shed a mysterious bundle, which the divers ferried back to the surface.

Once in open air, they opened the package and realized they'd found the contents of



Provided by Mental Floss

someone's wardrobe, and that someone must have been pretty well off. There were silk knee socks and a jacket, as well as a silk bodice embroidered in silver and gold.

But the most impressive piece was a damask gown with a high collar and ruffled sleeves—the kind of thing noblewomen or royalty might wear around the house. For

the gown, anyway, the shipwreck had been a blessing; on land, exposed to air and moths, it would be in much worse shape than it is today. Professor Emmy de Groot of the University of Amsterdam called it “the *Night Watch* of the costume world.”

The wreck site also disgorged a variety of fancy-people artifacts, including pomander balls, a silver vessel, Italian pottery, spices, and leather-bound books. One of those books bears the coat of arms of King Charles I, which suggests that the ship's passengers may have belonged to the royal house of Stuart.

The gown and other finds from the shipwreck are currently on display at Texel's delightful Kaap Skil Maritime and Beachcombers' Museum, and will return there permanently after they're examined and treated by conservators.

Images from YouTube // Museum Kaap Skil Oudeschild, Texel

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A Banshee in Indiana - Haunted Ohio Books

hauntedohiobooks.com

This is the official website of the 7-volume Haunted Ohio series and the Ghosts of the Past series by Ohio author Chris Woodyard

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I am putting the finishing touches on my upcoming book: *The Headless Horror: Strange and Ghostly Ohio Tales* (and you don't know what finishing touches are until you've skimmed 969 contemporary newspaper articles on the decapitation murder of Pearl Bryan) so, pressed for time, I am posting a longish story about what seems to be a 19th century banshee in Indiana.

What were called "tokens of death" were a frequent theme in the ghost stories of the past. These could be anything from headless apparitions or women in white appearing just before a death, dogs howling, or a spook light hovering over a doomed person. I myself grew up hearing that birds tapping on window glass or pictures falling off the wall meant that someone was going to die.

The lore of the British Isles tells us of banshees who wail, shriek or sob as portents of someone's death. Certain families have their own clan banshees, who follow family descendants wherever they may be. Compared to other types of death tokens, banshees are uncommon, but not unknown in the United States. (In *The Face in the Window*, I reported on a man at a Cincinnati hospital who said he was doomed because he had heard the banshee.)

This story does not give the wife's maiden name; Davis, however, is a Welsh surname and the Welsh call their banshee the *Gwrach y Rhibyn*. Is this a true story? I can only say that The *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* published a great many supernatural stories, some more plausible than others.

A TOKEN OF DEATH

The Strange Tapping On the Window

And the Low, Mournful Moan, Like the Cry of a Woman in Distress.

How a Mother's Demise Affected Her Daughter's Family

Many Miles Away.

"Something that has always appealed largely to my credulity and that I never could explain occurred to me, or rather to my wife, some twenty years back," said J. F. Davis, who is stopping at the Laclede, to a *Globe-Democrat* reporter yesterday. "It is a case of genuine spiritual telegraphy, as I deem it. "I'll make a story of it.

"In 1855 I was married in Dayton, Ohio. My wife was the daughter of a well-to-do farmer who resided in that vicinity, where I was buying wool at that time. My wife

was one of three children, and the only daughter. I will say here, and you will see how it figures in my story later on, that my wife was a very attentive and hard-working girl, and I knew that her parents loved her the best of all. After we were married we moved to Terre Haute, Ind., and I took charge of a very large woollen mill as manager. My wife's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Schauab, removed to Western Pennsylvania, very close to Red Bank. We did very well in Terre Haute. I bought an interest in a woollen mill there myself, built a good home and raised a large family.

"After about five years of absence my wife desired to revisit her parents and nothing would do but that we must go. Traveling eastward or westward in 1861 was not what it is to-day, I assure you. It meant that I must forsake my business for many weeks; that all the family must be taken along for the sake of safety, and that cost a large outlay of money. We paid the visit and I the bills, and finally returned home. At the time of parting from her mother my wife said that she felt just as though she should never see her again. The whole parting scene was rather said, now that I recall it.

"Well, we returned to Terre Haute, and for eight or nine years my wife corresponded regularly with her parents. Along about 1877 a letter came from home saying that her mother was ill, but not seriously so. Still it worried my wife a great deal and set her to thinking seriously of going home again. The weight of business and family affairs had grown by this time to such an extent that it required constant attention. My family was a large one, ten children in all, and my wife was an excellent manager, so that in view of the constant need of her I was seriously opposed to her going. Any how she wrote a letter saying that she would come home if they needed her, but that she hoped all would be well without.

"A few days after I mailed this letter—it was in the winter time and snowing—I came home from the mill and prepared to enjoy myself as I usually did of a winter evening. We had supper and my wife straightened things. She put the children to bed, that is, the little ones, and we sat alone in the sitting room. I was reading my paper and she was knitting, as she always did, before the fire. About 10 o'clock she stirred in her chair and said:

"Did you hear some one walking?"

"I said, 'No,' for I didn't. I felt at once that that was a queer question for her to ask, for it was snowing outside rather heavily. It was one of those soft, wet snow-storms, and it would take a rather heavy walker to be heard on a gravel walk. I said, 'Why, it's snowing out. You certainly did not hear any one walk.' Just then she said:

"Listen; some one's tapping on the window."

"Bah," I said, half nettled at what I deemed her odd fancies, 'I don't hear any one.' I arose from my chair, just to satisfy myself and her, and opened the side door to

which the gravel path led. I looked, but no one was there. It was simply snowing heavily, and no boot marks were visible. I turned back, fully assured that it was all her imagination. For a little while nothing happened. I got interested in some newspaper tale, and she again rocked to and fro in her chair, when all at once I heard a tapping on the window pane. My wife heard it too. She stopped and looked at me with that triumphant glance of 'there, now, I told you so,' coupled with wild-eyed surprise.

"We listened. It came again—once, twice, three times. I dropped my paper and opened the door. My wife came and looked over my shoulder out into the darkness. There was not a sign of any one, although I had reached the door quickly, and no footprints were in the snow. I remember saying, 'Well that's queer.'" And shutting the door. Then we sat down to discuss the matter. It was rather a serious discussion, I assure you, although I was not, and am not now seriously given to a belief in the supernatural. We talked of the matter, I dare say, ten minutes, when all at once my wife said:

"There it is again."

"Before I could realize what it was, a low, mournful sound came from without; not from the ground, I thought, but from the lower branches of a tree that stood a little distance from the door. It was just like a woman crying in most woeful bitterness. Oh, that cry was simply awful. It was just a long, low human wail that seemed to contain the bitterest sorrow. I was almost dumbfounded. I thought my wife would faint, but she only sat still, very pale and looked at me. Finally I got up and went to the door. It was the same story as before. There was not a sign of any one's presence.

"My wife took it at once for what it was—a token. She said that she knew something must have happened at home, that mother was worse or dead, but she could hardly think of that. Four days later a letter came to my office for her. It was not black bound, for they couldn't buy mourning paper that far out in the country, and maybe they didn't care to. But it was from home, and I felt that it must bring news of death. I opened it, and sure enough it told her mother's end, how at 9 o'clock on the night that the omen came her mother had died from a sudden inflammation and that her dying exclamation was, 'Oh! I want to see Sarah' – that is my wife's first name. I withheld the letter for ten days, or until I thought her nervousness had passed away and that she had strength enough to bear the news. Then I broke the tidings to her and gave her the letter. It was a cruel blow, and it seemed cruel on my part to withhold the news so long; but I still think it was best.

"Not long after, to appease her anger and satisfy her longings, I took her home again, where she visited her father and the grave of her mother. But, aside from all that, I firmly believe in tokens now. I have had some other queer, unexplainable things to happen since then, all of which have convinced me in the belief that

there is something that passes between those who have strong bonds of affection between them, that in moments of extreme joy or sorrow flies like an arrow with the news, and we call them tokens. *Cincinnati [OH] Enquirer* 3 December 1892: p. 13

This story and other banshee and token-of-death tales are found in *The Ghost Wore Black: Ghastly Tales from the Past*, which is available in paperback and for Kindle. You'll also find death-omen and Angel of Death/Grim Reaper tales in *The Victorian Book of the Dead*, also found on Amazon and other retailers in paperback and for Kindle.

Posted by

Chris Woodyard

on November 15, 2012 in Death, Fairies and Elemental Spirits, Folklore, Fortean Mysteries, Ghosts, Grim and Grewsome, Mourning Customs and History, News, Strange Deaths, Victorian, Wonders and Curiosities and tagged banshee, banshees, death premonitions, fairies, Indiana, tokens of death

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<http://karlshuker.blogspot.com/2016/04/a-dreamtime-dromedary-not-really-but.html>

Saturday, 16 April 2016

A DREAMTIME DROMEDARY? NOT REALLY, BUT STILL A ONE-HUMPED WONDER DOWN UNDER!



Dromedary in the desert (public domain)

Australia is renowned as a land of strange animals, both in the living world and in aboriginal Dreamtime lore. Marsupials, monotremes, monsters, and more, drawn forth from both reverie and reality, have deftly interacted, intermingled, and integrated with one another here for countless millennia to yield an extraordinary menagerie of creatures that is truly unique, and emphatically unlike anything that can be encountered elsewhere in the world.

During the early 1800s, however, reports surfaced Down Under of a creature that was decidedly bizarre even by this island continent's zoological standards, and unquestionably esoteric even in comparison with its native traditions.



Dromedary, illustration from *Drawings of Animals of Greece and the Levant* by eminent wildlife artist Ferdinand Bauer (1760-1826) (public domain)

The somewhat tragic history of this enigmatic, still-unresolved, yet nowadays long-forgotten entity was recalled in E. Lloyd's *A Visit to the Antipodes: With Some Reminiscences of a Sojourn in Australia* (1846) as follows:

I have to record a tradition that exists among the white people in the north country, with reference to an animal that sometimes appears, much to their alarm. This is no other than a camel. It is said, amongst the other wise things done by the sanguine people that first settled the land, that one gentleman, arguing from the natural dryness of the climate, that it was a country similar to the Zahara [sic], or Great Desert, and required animals of the same powers

of endurance to travel over it, resolved upon doing nothing less than importing a camel, from which he anticipated reaping a fortune. However, calamitously, the camel, after its arrival in the colony, got lost, or ran away into the bush, and for a long time afterwards was never heard of. It is however stated, that he appeared to some shepherds, while tending their flocks, and who were not a little surprised, not to say amazed, at the unlooked-for visitation.

The blacks, in terror, fled at his approach, exclaiming, "big one bullocky! big one bullocky!" It is likewise stated, that the forlorn camel, for a long time roamed through the country, like the wandering Jew, seeking society but finding none; sometimes appearing unintentionally and unexpectedly to shepherds and black fellows, and being innocently the cause of great alarm, until at last another outcast left the realms of social intercourse, and cast himself upon his own energies. This was a harmless donkey, one of three which had found their way into this province. Having strayed from his sphere, like a comet, he took an orbit of his own, exceedingly eccentric, until the two forlorn and wandering planets came within the reach of each other's attraction, and were brought into contact, the result of which is, that they now roam the forest together, alike forsaken, and irrevocably lost.



Dromedary - plate by Simon Charles Miger after Nicolas Maréchal (1753-1803), from *La Ménagerie du Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle* by Bernard-Germain-Étienne de Lacépède, Georges Cuvier, and Étienne Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire (1804) (public domain)

This sad little episode was no doubt repeated many times thereafter too, with dromedaries *Camelus dromedarius* imported Down Under for desert exploration ultimately escaping (or

being deliberately released), because today there are naturalised herds of these one-humped camels in many parts of Australia, including the Northern Territory, western Queensland, northern South Australia, and (especially) Western Australia. Indeed, by 2005 there were an estimated 500,000 individuals living in the wild amid this vast island continent, and increasing at an annual growth rate of 10 per cent (so if this rate had stayed constant from then until now, by the end of 2015 there would have been around 1 million).

What makes Lloyd's account so noteworthy however, is that according to official records, the first camels imported into Australia (all dromedaries) did not arrive until 1840, and their whereabouts were fully documented until beyond 1846 (the publication date of Lloyd's book). Moreover, the first major importations did not occur until 1860. Yet his account makes clear that the camel reported by Lloyd had been roaming the deserts Down Under long before the 1840s - so who was its original owner, and when exactly had it been imported into Australia?

A herd of domesticated dromedaries (public domain)



Unless this entire event is a hoax, or unless there are even earlier records still awaiting disclosure, it would appear that this bewildering 'big one bullocky' was the very first dromedary ever to set hoof in the Antipodes. Hardly surprising, therefore, that it elicited such consternation among its astonished aboriginal observers.

After all, even taking into account the dramatic zoological diversity to be found amid ancient native lore here, a dromedary would still seem a very daunting entity to anyone not previously cognisant of camelids. And so, even though it was not a bona fide dromedary of the Dreamtime, this unexpected itinerant was nonetheless a veritable one-humped wonder Down Under!



If you'd never seen a dromedary before, this very sizeable and strange-looking beast would certainly be a most daunting creature to encounter in the wild! (public domain)

NB - Although the imported camel's species was not specified in Lloyd's account, his above-quoted comparison of northern Australia's dry climate with that of North Africa's Sahara plus his argument that animals required to traverse the former territory's arid terrain would need to be ones that are capable of surviving in the

latter desert readily confirm that it must have been a dromedary. For this species was indeed originally native to the Sahara, and also to the Arabian Desert in the Middle East, before becoming domesticated and transported widely across the globe (with its wild ancestors eventually dying out around 2,000 years ago).

In contrast, the only other modern-day species, the Bactrian or two-humped camel *C. bactrianus*, is much rarer, and is native only to the steppes of central Asia in the wild state. Moreover, in its domestic form this latter species has only been introduced into Australia much more recently and in much smaller numbers than the dromedary, with only a very few individuals known to be existing in a naturalised state anywhere in Australia

A young white domestic Bactrian camel (© Dr Karl Shuker)

This ShukerNature blog article is excerpted and expanded from my book ***Mysteries of Planet Earth: An Encyclopedia of the Inexplicable***.



Posted by Dr Karl Shuker at 20:34

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A festival of the Dreaming

AMBER WILSON May 11, 2016, 5 p.m.

thecourier.com.au

The Courier

The Courier

Thursday May 12, 2016

IT'S BEEN about 160 years since the Wadawurrung people have held a corroboree in

Ballarat.



*No longer hidden:
Sovereign Hill education
officer Alice Barnes and
senior designer James
Baker with Wadawurrung
elder Bryon Powell. Picture:
Lachlan Bence*

IT'S BEEN about 160 years since the Wadawurrung people have held a corroboree in Ballarat.

"We still have these cultural obligations, we still care for country, we're still asking people to give it back. - Uncle Bryon Powell"

The traditional practice of connecting with the Dreamtime via dance and song was once a regular affair, led by the likes of Mullawallah, also known as King Billy.

With all that time gone by, it may come as no surprise that today's Wadawurrung people are keen to bring the practice back.

The Wadawurrung Aboriginal Corporation has teamed up with Sovereign Hill to host not only a corroboree, but a whole week of free events telling the story of Indigenous involvement in the Goldrush era.

Wadawurrung elder Uncle Bryon Powell said "King Billy and his mob" used to regularly host corroborees in Ballarat.

He said the Indigenous locals helped the miners when they were running out of food and clothes, with many of the newcomers lacking the survival skills to hunt native animals.

"The Aboriginal people helped feed and clothe the miners and diggers. At one stage, we were looking after the children of the miners," Uncle Powell said.

"The thing about Aboriginal people is even though you're getting kicked in the guts and losing your land, you can't see people starve. We're always lending a helping hand.

"We still have these cultural obligations, we still care for country, we're still asking people to give it back."

Uncle Powell said there were "very few" Indigenous miners hunting for gold, because Wadawurrung culture did not have the same obsession with the mineral.

"Initially we were employed as native police and we were the ones who escorted the gold from the diggings to the banks, because we had no value for it," he said.

He said the Indigenous community was pleased to team up with Sovereign Hill and finally tell their story, which had long been hidden.

The Gnarrwurring Ngitj Festival will be held May 27 to June 3, featuring special education programs, a documentary screening, cultural workshops, lectures and guided tours.

The corroboree will be held June 3 at Sovereign Hill. For more information on the festival, visit sovereignhill.com.au/reconciliationweek

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A Florida Man Chewed Off His Fingertips and Ate Them To Avoid Being Fingerprinted

complex.com

By Claire Landsbaum
Aug 1, 2015

In a stroke of genius, a Florida man arrested for driving a stolen Mercedes chewed off and ate his fingertips to avoid being fingerprinted by police. Despite his dedication, a fingertip scanner quickly identified Kenzo Roberts, who was also carrying a fake I.D., three fake credit cards, and a concealed firearm, *WPTV* reports.

A security camera shows Roberts carefully chewing off the ends of his fingers, swallowing the flesh, and rubbing them against the police car's metal caging for good measure. Roberts already had two warrants out for his arrest for aggravated assault with a deadly weapon and was in the country illegally.

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Recently Dr Beachcombing posted a Victorian story of a “good Christian” robin who perched near the pulpit, listened attentively to the sermon, and warbled forth (as it seemed to the narrator) God’s praise. It was all very charming, but in some circles, the pew-holders would have been blanching in their seats: a robin that wanders indoors is said to be an omen of death. [Another day, another post...]

Let us look at another bird, a creature of darkness, found in the church at West Drayton, Middlesex.

THE SPECTRAL BIRD AT WEST DRAYTON.

In the middle of the last century, *circa* 1749, owing to several remarkable circumstances which had then recently occurred, a conviction became almost universal amongst the inhabitants of the village, that the vaults under the church [St Martin’s, if I’m not mistaken] of West Drayton, near Uxbridge, were haunted. Strange noises were heard in and about the sacred building, and the sexton of that day, a person utterly devoid of superstition, was on inquiry and examination compelled to admit that certain unaccountable occurrences in regard to the vault had taken place. There are, it is said, three large vaults under the chancel — in the chief of which, towards its eastern part, the ancient and noble family of Paget find their last resting-place. Two other vaults are situated near the west end of the choir, one of the De Burghs, a more ancient family still. From each of these, the most remarkable knockings were sometimes heard, commonly on Friday evenings as was said; and many curious people from the village used to come together to listen to them. They were never either explained or explained away. Some people affirmed that one person had secretly murdered another, then committed suicide, and that both the bodies had been buried side by side in the same grave. Others maintained that three persons from an adjacent mansion-house in company had gone to look through a grating in the side of the foundation of the church—for the ventilation of the vault, and from which screams and noises were heard constantly, and had there seen a very large black raven perched on one of the coffins. This strange bird was seen more than once by the then parish clerk pecking from within at the grating, and furiously fluttering about within the enclosed vault. On another occasion it was seen by other people in the body of the church itself. The wife of the parish clerk and her daughter often saw it. The local bell-ringers, who all professed to deny its existence and appearance, one evening, however, came together to ring a peal, when they were told by a youth that the big raven was flying about inside the chancel. Coming together into the church with sticks and stones and a lantern, four men and two boys found it

fluttering about amongst the rafters. They gave chase to it, flinging at it, shouting at and endeavouring to catch it. Driven hither and thither for some time, and twice or thrice beaten with a stick, so that one of its wings seemed to have been thus broken and made to droop, the bird fell down wounded with expanded wings, screaming and fluttering into the eastern part of the chancel, when two of the men on rushing towards it to secure it, and driving it into a corner, vaulted over the communion rails, and violently proceeded to seize it. As the account stands, it at once sank wounded and exhausted on to the floor, and as they believed in their certain grasp, but all of a moment—vanished!

It is said to be constantly seen, from time to time, often perched on the communion-rails of the sanctuary, or heard fluttering violently within the vault beneath.

Several respectable people attested to eye- and ear-witness sightings of the spectral bird:

Mrs de Burgh, the wife of Mr R. L. de Burgh, sometime Vicar of West Drayton, writes thus to me:—

“July 16, 1883.

“Your question has aroused recollections of often hearing sounds in Drayton Church like the strong fluttering of a large bird. It was many years ago; and I had quite forgotten it until I got your note. I can remember feeling persuaded that a bird must have got into the family vault, and in going outside to look into it through the iron bars to try if anything could be seen there, the sounds were then always in the chancel in the same place. This is all I am afraid I can remember about it. I have not even thought of it for years past.

Julia De Burgh.”

A Mrs White, whose relations (gentleman-farmers in the village) lived at West Drayton from 1782 to 1818, tells me through a friend that thereabouts “the country folks always believed that the Spectral Bird which haunted Drayton Church was the restless and miserable spirit of a murderer who had committed suicide, and who, through family influence, instead of being put into a pit or hole, with a stake through his body at the cross-road by Harmondsworth, as was the sentence by law, had been buried in consecrated ground on the north side of the churchyard.”

A lady and her sister—as I am informed (1878)—who on one Saturday afternoon in 1869 had gone into Drayton Church to place some vases of flowers upon the communion-table, on coming out, each saw a great Black Bird perched upon one of the pews,— which they believed must have escaped from the Zoological Gardens or some menagerie.

A gentleman who is well informed, thus writes:—

"The thoroughly sceptical tone of the newspapers is such that persons would be held up to scorn and ridicule who might have the hardihood to maintain the reality of any supernatural appearance or intervention. Though I *know* that Drayton Church is haunted by the spirit of a murderer, who appears as a very large raven, I do not add particulars and do not give names."

Glimpses in the twilight: being various notes, records, and examples of the Supernatural, Rev. Frederick George Lee, 1885

This story presents us with a portmanteau of local folklore: a monstrous vanishing black bird as well as phantom flutterings (and who doesn't love an aural haunting?), purported suicides illicitly buried in consecrated soil, murder-suicide victims in the one grave, and screams and knockings in the crypt. I was waiting for the sexton to find coffins tossed every which way in the sealed vault.... Could the escape of the inevitable gasses of decomposition explain the screams/knockings?

In his post, Dr Beachcombing suggested that the church-going robin was really after the communion bread-crumbs. Does that explain why the spectral bird was seen "constantly" on the communion-rails? Or perhaps it was because ravens are blood-drinkers. As to the bird's appearance in the vault, well, corvids are known to hold funerals.

As an aside, it is unusual to find the "escaped from a menagerie" trope used to explain a ghostly animal. It suggests that the creature had an uncanny (or an earthly?) solidity. It is also notable that the folklore trope we do *not* find is the suggestion that the black bird is an omen of death. That job can be left, no doubt, to the innocent-looking robins.

You'll find a story of another ghostly black bird in this post on mysterious birds.

Posted by

Chris Woodyard

on February 2, 2016 in Animal Tales, Fairies and Elemental Spirits, Folklore, Fortean Mysteries, Ghosts, News, religion, Victorian and tagged A Fluttering in the Vault, Drayton Church, ghostly bird, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, murderer's ghost, the Spectral Bird of West Drayton, West Drayton

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A Ghost Rabbit as Big as a Sheep - Beachcombing's Bizarre History Blog

strangehistory.net

Beachcombing's Bizarre History Blog

The outlandish, the anomalous and the curious from the last five thousand years

A Ghost Rabbit as Big as a Sheep January 17, 2016

Author: Beach Combing | in : Modern , [trackback](#)

Welsh ghost stories always have something extra: maybe it is the water, maybe Methodism, maybe coal dust... They are, in any case, always worth reading. This one starts with a nun that is admittedly not very promising but bear with her.

Llangynwydd, which is in the Llynvi Valley, has a ghost scare on just now. Near the pillage are the ruins of an old British castle, known as Castle Coch. Local tradition has it that in the ruins a chest of gold is buried, and is supernaturally guarded. One evening about a week ago a terrified villager saw the figure of a tall, ethereal-looking nun cross the castle moat, climb to the top of the ruins, and then vanish.

So the nun is guarding the remains of the treasure. This is already pretty baroque by the standards of English ghosts: there best case scenario a nun is pining for love and occasionally walks through a wall. But this is a special nun.

A farmer, standing on the ruins the twilight, next saw the spectre. His dogs rushed towards it, only to recoil before a rabbit as big as a sheep, which had taken her place!

Remarkable. There are a number of British horror rabbits, including the deadly rabbit of Rochdale: go to the church there at your risk. But this is perhaps the only genuinely scary rabbit in the entire canon: as big as a sheep... Imagine the ears.

On the lady's last appearance a number of watchers advanced upon her in a circle. As they got closer she was transformed into a hare, which vanished into thin air.

The hare of course was an ancient British omen, and also the preferred vehicle of witches as they dashed across the countryside.

At this stage the strange affair rests. The spook's appearance has usually been about seven o'clock, and every night watchers from various parts of the valley, including many colliers, gather near the spot.

So not only do we have a shape-changing nun we have a rural ghost riot. Does it get any better? drbeachcombing AT yahoo DOT com

There are three modern ghosts associated with Castle Coch, all boring, all, indeed, of almost English mediocrity and no hint of shape-changers or rabbit ears as long as your leg.

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A Miniature Matterhorn and Gnome Miners: English Rockeries: 1900, 1909

wordpress.com

<https://mrsdaffodildigresses.wordpress.com/2014/05/21/a-miniature-matterhorn-and-gnome-miners-english-rockeries-1900-1909/>

Mrs Daffodil Digresses

A blog about costume, history, and social ephemera

A Miniature Matterhorn and Gnome Miners: English Rockeries: 1900, 1909

5 Replies



Sir Frank Crisp's miniature Matterhorn rockery.

WONDERFUL ROCK GARDEN

Englishman Has a Three Acre
Reproduction of the Matterhorn.

The largest rock garden in England is that of Sir Frank Crisp at Friar Park, Henley. It is a faithful reproduction of the Matterhorn on a scale of about three acres. Seven thousand tons of limestone were brought from Yorkshire to make it.

The snow capped peak is represented by quartz. Below it are thousands upon thousands of alpine flowers growing in pockets between the rocks and filling every chink in the trails that ascend the

mountain. There must be 200 different species in bloom at once.

At the base of the mountain is a miniature Swiss chalet, where one may sit and enjoy the scene, comparing all the main features with a little bronze model of the Matterhorn which Sir Frank had made for the entertainment of his guests. A book courses down the mountain side, and just before it reaches the chalet it forms a pretty cascade and then spreads out at your feet into a miniature lake decorated with pygmy water lilies and richly margined with pinks, primroses, gentians and other alpine flowers...

As to the Matterhorn feature, English critics are divided. They do not quarrel with the Japanese for imitating Fuji, but there is no precedent in England for duplicating any particular mountain. However, all are agreed that Sir Frank's alpine flowers are grown with admirable skill and arranged with perfect taste... *Country Life In America*, Vol. 16, 1909

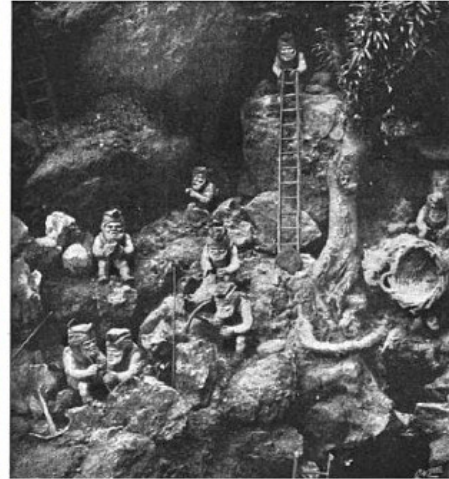
Mrs Daffodil's *Aide-memoire*: Friar Park, Henley-on-Thames, was bought by a musician named George Harrison, one of the principals in a group called by the misspelt appellation: The "Beatles." The building is an exceptionally eccentric Victorian structure, built by Sir Frank Crisp and restored by Mr Harrison, who also restored the gardens. It appears that the Matterhorn rockery still exists, but the house and grounds are not open to the public, as they are occupied by the relict of the late Mr Harrison.

This Alpine rockery did not stand alone in the annals of British gardening. Sir Charles Isham, Bart. at his seat at Lampport created a fantasy world, which he described as "an assemblage of small caves, crevices, excavations, and inequalities, carpeted and incrustated with vegetation suited to the purpose." The gentleman used special varieties of miniature trees, (cedars three feet high, for example) vines,

and



The Alpine Garden at Friar Park



Gnome miners at Sir Charles Isham's Lamport rockery. Just one of many assemblages.

flowers and added rather twee scenes using ceramic garden gnomes from Germany. It was said that the only comparable rockery in the world was one created by the Austrian Emperor's gardener, but it was judged by the cognoscenti to be far inferior to the one at Lamport where Sir Charles created crystal caves, Alpine meadows, and droll scenes of dwarf miners. One of the scenes showed the mining gnomes on strike:



Gnome Miners on Strike

Look at the reality of the picture, "On Strike," and consider the labour involved in the production of figures that so closely harmonize one with another and produce a life like effect, which was first conceived by the constructor and afterwards worked out with such skilful care. The notice board bearing the inscription :—

Eight hours' sleep, Eight hours' play, Eight hours' work, Eight shillings pay,

serves to emphasize the Trade Union spirit. It seems that the only person wanted to complete the scene is the paid agitator, unless the little gentleman on the upper ledge, who is dignified by the possession of a hat as compared with the

caps of the miners, may be considered as such....In a different part of the rockery is depicted another mining scene—a set of miners, whose demands have evidently been satisfied, and we see some of them at work with pick and shovel, others wheeling barrows or climbing ladders, whilst others sit and smoke the pipe of peace—or laziness. In still another part of the rockery are a number of miners loaded with chains, and who, apparently, have task-masters set over them. Let us hope they exact a full day's work. *The Strand*, Vol. 19 1900

There was one other, distinctive figure in the Lamport rockery:

One figure that graces the rockery, and a photograph of which is shown on this page, in comparison with the gnomes is as a giantess amongst the pigmies. The contrast is so great that one's attention is immediately arrested, and frequently at a slight distance the impression given is that it is of a living child. The figure was first exposed to public gaze in the Brussels exhibition, from whence it found its way into the shop of a London curio dealer, only to be rescued by Sir Charles Isham to adorn his rockery. Since that time the young lady has been presented with a gorgeous hat and a diamond ring by two interested visitors, and in the picture she may be seen wearing both. *The Strand*, Vol. 19 1900



Sir Charles's rockery girl figure.



Sir Charles Isham in his rockery.

Alas, the Lamport rockery has been dismantled. Local legend says that the gnomes were used for air-rifle target practice by Sir Charles's daughters. Just one of the originals survived the slaughter and may still be

seen at the Hall.

This entry was posted in Aristocracy, Edwardian, Fads, Gardening and flowers, Gentlemen, News and Announcements, Victorian, Wonders and Curiosities and tagged alpine gardens, Edwardian rockeries, fantasy gardens, Friar Park, garden gnomes, George Harrison, grottos, Lamport, Sir Charles Isham, Sir Frank Crisp on May 21, 2014 .

5 thoughts on "A Miniature Matterhorn and Gnome Miners: English Rockeries: 1900, 1909"

1. Stephen Barker May 22, 2014 at 1:45 pm

Last time I saw the surviving Gnome it was under a glass dome in the library. Sir Charles also had mottoes carved in the stonework of the house and I believe like many Victorians was interested in spiritualism.

1. chriswoodyard Post author May 22, 2014 at 2:47 pm

Most interesting! What sort of mottos were they? There was a fad for "olde-Englishe" mottos among the arts and crafts enthusiasts. There is a photograph of the surviving gnome on Lamport's web-page. One wonders if Sir Charles also believed in fairies, like Spiritualist Sir Arthur Conan Doyle?
Many thanks for writing.
Mrs Daffodil

2. Serge Aubert August 16, 2014 at 5:32 am

I am preparing a book on the history of the alpine gardens and I would like to know the source of the image "Sir Frank Crisp's miniature Matterhorn rockery". I came to know Friar Park from a reference in the history of alpine gardens written by Marcel Mirande, former director of the Lautaret alpine botanical garden (1911 – Les jardins alpins et leurs buts – Notice sur les jardins alpins de l'Université de Grenoble. Annales Université de Grenoble – tome XXIII N°1 p 1-45).

Congratulation for your blog.

Serge Aubert, professor at Grenoble university and director of the Lautaret alpine botanical garden

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Jardin-alpin-du-Lautaret/288263514644873>

1. chriswoodyard Post author August 18, 2014 at 9:50 am

Dear Sir,

Apologies for not getting this information to you immediately. Usually I have sources listed for my illustrations somewhere in my files, but have misplaced this one. I seem to remember that it came either from this forum (although the photo is not there now.)

<http://www.beatlelinks.net/forums/showthread.php?t=11306>

or this link. <http://www.gardenhistorymatters.com/2012/01/is-it-rock-garden-rockery-or-alpine.html>. There were also articles in the Strand and Country Life (as cited in the article) but I cannot find this illustration there. Such an extravagant conception for a garden!

Best,

Mrs Daffodil

1. **Serge Aubert** August 18, 2014 at 10:03 am

Thank you very much.

Best, Serge Aubert

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A Real Ghost Ship? Rescue party found whole crew dead, their eyes open, faces looking towards the sun, arms outstretched

thevintagenews.com



The Vintage News Site

A Real Ghost Ship? Rescue party found whole crew dead, their eyes open, faces looking towards the sun, arms outstretched

Apr 14, 2016



ourang-medan

In February 1948, distress calls were picked up by numerous ships near Indonesia from the Dutch freighter *SS Ourang Medan*. The chilling message was, "All officers including captain are dead lying in chartroom and bridge. Possibly whole crew dead." This message was followed by indecipherable Morse code then one final grisly message... "I die."

When the first rescue vessel arrived on the scene a few hours later, they tried to

hail the *Ourang Medan* but there was no response to their hand and whistle signals. A boarding party was sent to the ship and what they found was a frightening sight that has made the *Ourang Medan* one of the strangest and scariest ghost ship stories of all time.

When *Silver Star* crew located and boarded the apparently undamaged *Ourang Medan* in a rescue attempt, the ship was found littered with corpses (including the carcass of a dog) "sprawled on their backs, the frozen faces upturned to the sun with mouths gaping open and eyes staring, the dead bodies resembled horrible caricatures", with no survivors and no visible signs of injuries on the dead bodies. When nearing the bodies in the boiler room, the rescue crew felt a chill though the temperature was near 110°F.



The decision was made to tow the ship back to port but before they could get underway, smoke began rolling up from the hull. The rescue crew left the ship and barely had time to cut the tow lines before the Ourang Medan exploded and sank.

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A town with history of a burning witch issue

falkirkherald.co.uk



Ian Scott

11:00Saturday 30 April 2016

A couple of weeks ago I was at the Lyceum in Edinburgh to see a new production of Arthur Miller's celebrated play *The Crucible* with its chilling account of the famous witch trials in Salem, Massachusetts in the late 17th century.

The following day, on my way to Bo'ness, I drove along Corbiehall and was immediately reminded that a couple of

decades before the events in America the good folk down there had burned a number of women for the same 'offence'.



Another good old Scottish custom sent across to the colonies with the emigrants!

Of course, it was not unique to Scotland but a European wide practice that crossed the religious divide.

'Christians' both before and after the Reformation followed the Bible injunction that "thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" and this led, at different periods, to massive witch hunts in which tens of thousands of women and hundreds of men

were accused, examined, tortured and executed.

Scotland was one of the most active with some estimates putting the number of burnings at 4000, with the late 1500s the worst.

Here the law allowed the accused to be subject to horrible tortures like thumbscrews and the boot, where wooden wedges were driven into an iron boot crushing the bones of the victim.

Little wonder that the confessions flowed and some ludicrous admissions were made!

The records in Falkirk are fairly quiet on such activity but Bo'ness and Carriden were different.

There was a renewed flare up in the later 17th century with the authorities very active in seeking out those under suspicion.

Complaints about milk turning sour, animals dying or people falling sick often led to the person blamed for the curse ending up in the Tolbooth.

In 1648, for example, six women were burned as witches in Carriden, possibly at the spot where the so called 'Witches Stone' still stands not far from the old graveyard at Carriden House.

Thirty years later brought the most celebrated and best recorded case.

In Bo'ness in 1679 five women – Margaret Pringle, Bessie Vickar, Annapple Thomsone and two called Margaret Hamilton, along with their so called 'warlock' William Craw – were charged with witchcraft.

It is not clear exactly what they were supposed to have been planning, although one part of the charge talks about attempting to "destroy Andrew Mitchell, son to John Mitchell, elder in Dean of Kinneil".

However it was their admission that they had entered into "a paction with the Devil" and renounced their baptism that eventually led to the guilty verdicts.

Their confessions included meetings with Satan and drinking several "chopins of ale" with him.

They also told tales of turning into black crows and flying down from Grange to the kirkyard at Corbiehall where the devil – in the form of a large black dog – had his wicked way with them, before they danced around the graves while the devil played the pipes.

The women were all widows and the indictments claimed they had been the devil's servants and handmaidens for several decades.

The specially convened assize, made up of leading Bo'ness citizens, had no doubt that all of this was true and the six were sentenced to death.

On December 23, 1679 they were 'wirried (that is strangled with wire) then burned at the stake at the west end of Corbiehall below the Pan Brae.

By the start of the following century the stirrings of the Scottish Enlightenment meant that superstitious practices began to wane and, eventually, disappeared.

The last known witch execution in Scotland took place at Dornoch in Sutherland in 1722 and a few years later the Act against witchcraft was repealed.

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Driver informs police he's an alien royal and if they tow his car, he will destroy planet Earth

shanghaiist.com



BLM18GQM00AP0001.png

One young driver in Huzhou, Zhejiang province, tried something absolutely out of this world to avoid getting a ticket. Thankfully, his reasoning was recorded by police and has since gone on viral on the Chinese internet.

The young man was stopped by police earlier this week and found to have 27 unresolved traffic violations. After police informed him that they

needed to tow his car, the man told them why that would be a very bad idea for all of humanity.

"You have your regulations, but we have our regulations in the Milky Way as well. I'm from a royal family. If you let me go, then I will let this incident pass. However, if you piss me off, I will be forced to destroy the Earth. My royal family is the biggest in the galaxy and no one has ever dared to make me this unhappy," the man said, without disclosing where exactly in the Milky Way he is from.

When asked by a bemused traffic officer why he doesn't get around in a plane instead of a car, the "alien" replied: "I don't fly in planes, I drive a FUA... erm... I mean UFO."

Despite his best efforts, the car still got towed. AnBot save us from the angry Milky Wayers!

By *Liting Lin*

Contact the author of this article or email tips@shanghaiist.com with further questions, comments or tips.

By Shanghaiist in News on Apr 28, 2016 4:40 PM

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All Those Quarters You Lose In Your Car Go To China... And Then Get Sold Back To The U.S.

consumerist.com



All Those Quarters You Lose In Your Car Go To China... And Then Get Sold Back To The U.S.

April 29, 2016 By Kate Cox

When Americans travel, our money goes with — and not just in a metaphorical sense. Where people go, coins get left behind. Meanwhile, the pennies we drop at home get swept into trash heaps and scrap yards, falling out of sight and out of mind. But that doesn't mean they don't exist — and even if they're beat up, it doesn't mean they lose their value.

The Wall Street Journal reports this week on the weird and lucrative market of coin repatriation. Money that has traveled around the world can come back home, and those pennies add up.

How many nickels, dimes, and quarters have you lost in your car over the years? Now multiply that by 315 million Americans and the more than 250 million cars we collectively own, and it adds up.

When those cars are scrapped and shredded, the metal goes overseas, often to China. And that's where the repatriation business comes in.

A bunch of hired hands go through all that salvage and pulls out the coins. The man behind the repatriation business then collects them in bulk, from various salvage yards, and ships them to a partner in the U.S. The American partner then turns in all those coins to the Mint, which will buys back for nearly face value.

It adds up — big. The U.S. Mint has paid out more than \$100 million in coin redemption since 2009, the WSJ reports. And it's not just American money, either: repatriation takes place for British coins too, for example.

If it sounds like maybe that fat wad of cash is too good to be true, well, the feds think so too. So many more coins started pouring in since 2009 that law-enforcement officials are thinking a bunch of them have to be fake.

The coin reimbursement program shut down last year, and officials detained \$664,000 worth of coins from our cunning entrepreneur. While the man profiled in the WSJ piece was not accused of any wrongdoing, federal prosecutors allege three others in the same line of work have been importing counterfeit coins.

April 29, 2016 By Kate Cox

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Italy police stumble upon 'priceless' ancient artefacts - BBC News

bbc.com

BBC By News from Elsewhere... ...as found by BBC Monitoring
 BBC

• 15 April 2016



The archaeological finds are more than 2,000 years old according to experts

Police in southern Italy who were searching for illegal weapons uncovered a large hoard of ancient Greek relics instead.

Officers were looking for arms and ammunition in a house near the Sicilian city of Enna when they found a stash of artefacts which date from between the 5th and 2nd Centuries BC, *Corriere del Mezzogiorno* reports. In total, 254 pieces were seized from the site, including dozens of vases, oil lamps and terracotta figures, as video of the haul shows. The

pieces are thought to have come from settlements and burial sites in central and southern Sicily.

Police describe the finds as "priceless" but say they were being stored in cardboard boxes and plastic crates, wrapped in newspaper. Some had signs of salt incrustation, suggesting they had been fished out of the sea. They've now been handed over to the cultural heritage authority in Enna. "It's likely that they were ready to be put on the black market," says Gabriele Presti, head of the investigation team. The homeowner - a man with a string of previous convictions - was arrested.

Fittingly, the house where the relics were found is located on a hill above Pergusa Lake, long associated with Greek mythology. It's said to have been where a flower-picking Persephone was abducted by Hades and taken to the underworld. These days the lake is surrounded by a racetrack.

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Ancient Mass Graves Discovered in Greece : DNews

discovery.com

Apr 15, 2016 09:44 AM ET // by AFP



Archaeologists have discovered two mass graves near the Greek capital containing the skeletons of 80 men who may have been followers of ancient would-be tyrant Cylon of Athens.

Regional archaeological services director Stella Chryssoulaki laid out the theory Thursday as she unveiled the findings at the Central Archaeological Council, the custodians of Greece's ancient heritage.

Given "the high importance of these discoveries", the council is launching further investigations, the culture ministry said in a statement.

Two small vases discovered amongst the skeletons have allowed archaeologists to date the graves from between 675 and 650 BC, "a period of great political turmoil in the region", the ministry said.

The skeletons were found lined up, some on their backs and others on their stomachs. A total of 36 had their hands bound with iron.

They were discovered during excavations at an ancient cemetery on Athens' seaside outskirts, on the construction site of the new National Library of Greece and National Opera.

Archaeologists found the teeth of the men to be in good condition, indicating they were young and healthy.

This boosts the theory that they could have been followers of Cylon, a nobleman whose failed coup in the 7th century BC is detailed in the accounts of ancient historians Herodotus and Thucydides.

Cylon, a former Olympic champion, sought to rule Athens as a tyrant. But Athenians opposed the coup attempt and he and his supporters were forced to seek refuge in the Acropolis, the citadel that is today the Greek capital's biggest tourist attraction.

The conspirators eventually surrendered after winning guarantees that their lives would be spared.

But Megacles, of the powerful Alcmaeonid clan, had the men massacred — an act condemned as sacrilegious by the city authorities.

Historians say this dramatic chapter in the story of ancient Athens showed the aristocracy's resistance to the political transformation that would eventually herald in 2,500 years of Athenian democracy.

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Cum.¹

BAUM, see Balm.

BAUM-RAPPIT, *só.* Lan. An apparition or imaginary appearance.

Lan. There is a passage in Rochdale leading to St. Mary's Church called 'The Baum.' A man went through this passage late at night and afterwards this dialogue took place: 'Wot dost' think I seed last night? I seed a rappit.' 'That's nought, a rappit's common enoof.' 'But this were a baum-rappit.' The phr. is in use at the present time when a person says he has seen an appearance of some kind, which is thought unlikely or merely imaginary, 'It's nowt but a baum-rappit' (S.W.); 'Th' warst boggart there is upo' this country side. . . . I'd back it again oather witch, fairy . . . Baum Rappit, Radcliffe Dog, or the dule hisscl, WAUGH *Old Cronies* (1875) ii; I have twice met with those who believed in the baum-rappit, i. e. the phantom rabbit that is supposed to haunt the cloughs, *Manch. City News* (July 18, 1896).

BAUNIA, *só.* Irel. A flannel head-dress.

Glw. A baunia is a large square piece of home-made flannel, like a shawl, worn commonly worn by the women on their heads, and

Wisconsin man finds World War II-era bazooka rocket in basement

upi.com



By Ben Hooper | April 15, 2016 at 10:49 AM
Follow @oddnewsupi



A Wisconsin man cleaning out his basement discovered a World War II-era bazooka rocket. Photo courtesy of the Fond du Lac Police Department

FOND DU LAC, Wis., April 15 (UPI) -- A Wisconsin police department shut down a two-block area when a man brought in a World War II-era bazooka rocket he found in his basement.

The Fond du Lac Police Department closed down the

roads for two square blocks surrounding the City County Government Center Tuesday night after resident Jim Thomas brought the anti-tank explosive to the Fond du Lac County Sheriff's Office.

Thomas said he found the bazooka rocket Tuesday night while cleaning his basement.

"Routine house cleaning, maintenance, cleaning an old shelf in the basement that had been there forever, I looked up and it had a false top, a top that no one's ever noticed. I saw the old motor sitting up there in the rafters," Thomas told WLUK-TV.

Thomas said he decided to transport the rocket to police himself because he comes from a military background.

The Brown County Bomb Squad was called to the City County Government Center and dismantled the device, determining it was an inert training round.

"It's a little unnerving anytime you find something like this, because you never know what can happen," Fond du Lac police Assistant Chief Steve Klein told the Fond du Lac Reporter.

He said police made the right call by being cautious.

"You're talking about a rocket propelled grenade that's oftentimes used to take out tanks and things of that nature," Klein said.

Klein advised residents who make similar discoveries not to try to move suspected explosive devices.

"Leave those devices right where they're at and just call law enforcement, we'll come in and assess the situation," Klein said.

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People want Beachy McBeachface to be the name of an Australian council

2016-04-20 09:26:20 UTC

mashable.com

http://mashable.com/2016/04/20/beachy-mcbeachface-council/#pp_P6lkFlmqX



By Johnny Lieu 18 hours ago

The fallout from the legendary Boaty McBoatface is far from running out of steam.

The people in Australia have spoken and they want a council in the eastern suburbs of Sydney to be named none other than: Beachy McBeachface. It makes perfect sense. The area has a lot of beaches, just like Boaty McBoatface was a boat.

Three councils in Sydney's eastern suburbs are joining together and they need a name to see them into the future. To pick the most appropriate title, Waverley Council started running a survey to decide the name.

Oh Internet, never change. ♥ pic.twitter.com/znCcoeAsge

— Lucy Carter (@lucethoughts) April 19, 2016

In a poll run alongside the survey by *Fairfax Media*, the public scoffed in the face of options such as the Great Bays Council, Ocean Wave Council and Eastside, which sound more like knockoff surf brands than anything worth visiting.

Clearly the new council deserves a more dynamic, exciting name. According to the *Fairfax* poll, the people made it clear what they want: Beachy McBeachface.

A spokesperson told the publication that out of the 200 actual entries so far, the most popular is the agreeable-sounding Eastern Beaches Council. Yawn.

Unfortunately the poll, which closed on Wednesday with 61% voting for Beachy McBeachface, is just a poll after all. "These polls are not scientific and reflect the opinion only of visitors who have chosen to participate," a disclaimer sadly reads at the bottom.

The council has also implemented ways to suppress public support for the fantastic name, with a panel, consisting of mayors and representatives from the participating Waverley and Randwick councils, to pick three names from the suggestions.

One would hope the panel will pick well and in the public interest when the name Beachy McBeachface eventually makes its way onto their desk. We can only dream.

If you're on the panel and are reading this, just please think of the PR potential.

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An Exhibition
of recent British books on
MedicineIn the first floor exhibition area of the
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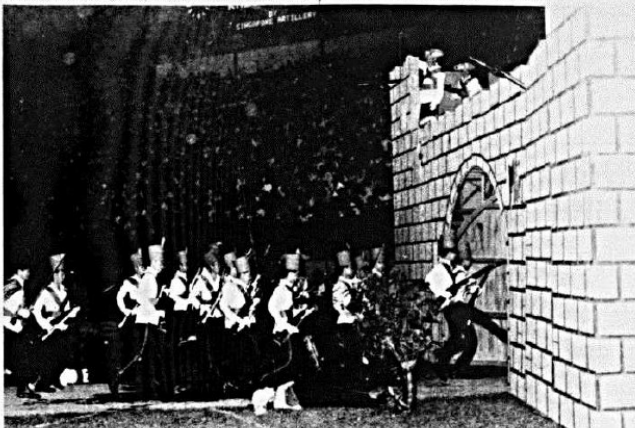
2nd - 14th July

Open: Monday - Friday 10am - 6pm
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anyone with an educational or professional
interest in medicine.For further details contact:
The British Council
Singapore Rubber House
14 Collyer Quay
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Tel: 93771Precision drill and
daredevilry at SAF tattooStory by JANIE KHOO
Pictures by FRANCIS ONGTHE versatility of our
soldiers was clearly
displayed in the 68,000
spectators who saw
last night's Singapore
Armed Forces Military
Tattoo at the National Stadium.For, beside the precision
drill and daredevilry
command-style tactics,
the spectators were also
treated to the less
expected aspects of the
army, namely the
creative and humorous
side.An unusual and original
performance which
received much applause
was the Indian Club
display put up by the
SAF "Jays" School, in
which a series of
a switch ball away.For seven minutes,
the entire stadium was
in utter darkness as 50
boys from the school
pranced about the field
waving clubs lit with
coloured lights forming
it into a fairy-land.

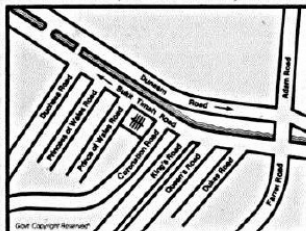
Laughter

The melody of lights,
appeared like fireflies,
as the boys formed different
patterns, each
new design drawing
laughing applause from
the vast
Another crowd-pleaseror was the frog and flag
dance by the Reservists
Association and the 7th
Battalion Singapore
Infantry Regiment.Laughter prevailed as
100 ill-dressed amphibians
leapt nimbly in a
bid to escape capture
by some scheming
"fishermen."An equally interesting
show was the military
drill display by the SAF
Proved Unit, whose
members executed
stunts like wheelbarrow
rides or pyramid formation
on their machines.

Effortless

And to show that they
would not be at a loss
without mechanisation,
the SAF Riders charged
into the stadium on
their steeds to jump
over obstacles and
eliminate their enemies
in one sweep of their
sabres.The tattoo also included
a performance by
the Singapore Police
Band and the SAF
Band, who played
brilliantly across the
bar and over
humans obstacles, winning
the hearts of the
thrilled spectators.As a fitting end to the
two-day tattoo, which is
to mark SAF Day, a
fire-and-bombardment war
The Battle of Kallang
Blow, was fought out as
the grand finale.

The charge of the Kallang army into the besieged fortress of the Kallang force.

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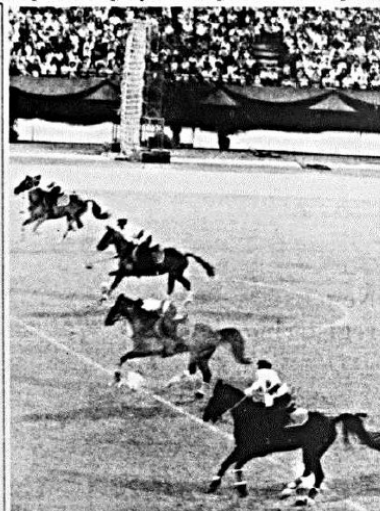
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The SAF Riders sweeping down on the enemy as they display excellent horsemanship.

GEN CHOO
OPENS
GUARDS
CAMPTHE Chief of General
Staff, Major General
Winston Choo, yesterday
opened the 2nd Battalion
Singapore Guards camp
in Lim Chu Kang Road.Gen Choo described the
battalion as having the
highest morale in the
Singapore Armed Forces.In military colour, the
officers and men of the
battalion have demon-
strated time and again
that they have a positive
attitude towards their
duties," he said.The camp, the eighth
standard infantry bat-
talion camp to be built by
the SAF, has a multi-pur-
pose block for recreational,
welfare and instructional
activities, among other facilities.About 1,000 guests, in-
cluding the principals and
students of 19 schools
were treated to a static
display of the equipment
and weapons used by the
guards and a mobile dis-
play.Found
hangedA 26-YEAR-OLD woman, Lee
Ann, was found hanging in
the toilet of her flat in Block
25, Lorong 8, Tanjong Pagar,
shortly after 1.45 p.m. yester-
day.Her brother, Lee Choon
Cheng, who declined to talk to
the press, told police his sister
had been depressed for the
past few days. No foul play is
suspected.Hysteria at
factoryTEN factory girls from an
electronics firm in Bedok
South were driven to the
hospital on Saturday for the
second day running.The firm's doctor attended
to the cases and later sent the
girls home after treatment.

Disco night

WHAMPOLA community centre
will hold a disco night at its
premises on Saturday.

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Florida man will attempt to travel to Bermuda by bubble

clickorlando.com

Reza Baluchi hopes to spread message of peace with his journey

By Janine Stanwood - Anchor/Reporter

Posted: 9:23 PM, April 13, 2016 Updated: 10:27 AM, April 14, 2016

POMPANO BEACH, Fla. - He's got a dream of spreading peace, and traveling the ocean in a giant bubble.

Wednesday marked Reza Baluchi's second attempt at making an aquatic voyage from South Florida to the Bermuda Triangle using his "hydro pod," a plastic container that allows him to run on water like a hamster in a giant Ferris wheel.

"I am excited," Baluchi said. "I have been two year(s) wait(ing) for this moment."

In October 2014, the Iranian-born endurance athlete from Pompano Beach embarked on his maiden voyage. But nearly 70 miles off of St. Augustine, he said his GPS had fallen into the ocean. The U.S. Coast Guard began monitoring his movements and eventually rescued him from the sea. Officials said Baluchi was disoriented.

"They burst my bubble, and now I put (a) sign up: 'Please don't burst my bubble,'" he said.

If the new-and-improved bubble Baluchi has been perfecting doesn't burst, he plans to trace the Bermuda Triangle, visiting Bermuda, Puerto Rico, Haiti and Cuba. He said he is stocked with protein bars, water and water purifiers.

Baluchi also said he has been jumping rope in a sauna and running 20 miles a day to prepare.

On Wednesday afternoon, in front of a crowd of sunbathers on Pompano Beach, Baluchi got into his bubble to begin his journey again. He said he appreciated the concern from the Coast Guard the last time around, but hopes no one interferes with this latest mission.

"Yes," Baluchi said. "Leave me alone. Leave me alone."

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Between A Rock and A Hard Place

wordpress.com

Posted on July 13, 2015 By Chad Abramovich



Logo



via the Mount Tabor Wikipedia page.

For years now, I've heard talk of adventures in the caves and abandoned quarries of Southern Vermont, which compelled me to research

them. The town of Dorset, northwest-ish of Manchester, has a remarkable 31 abandoned quarries within the town limits, and a drive through town offers some perspective here. Dorset is mostly mountainous, with the Green Mountains rising east of town, and a clump of formidable peaks that fill in the northwestern portion. The cluster of rocky eminents west of the Greens are part of the Taconic range, and consist of Mt. Aeolus, Owls Head, Netop and Dorset Mountain, sometimes called Dorset Peak. It's here where the geography offered profitable geology; marble.

The oldest commercial marble quarry in the United States was carved into Dorset bedrock in 1785 in the village of South Dorset, along today's Route 30. Over the next 130 years, about 30 more quarries would pit up the slopes of Mt. Aeolus and Dorset Peak. The marble expelled here was of such a fine quality, with attractive tints of greens and blues, that the demands multiplied and Dorset marble soon found notoriety in several significant buildings in major cities across the United States, such as New York and Washington DC.

One of the quarrying operations accomplished here was the awesome Freedley Quarry, located 1,000 feet up on the eastern slopes of Mount Aeolus. Freedley was unique, because instead of a hole in the ground, it was quarried in a horseshoe shaped tunnel, with caverns and passages blasted through the foundation of the mountain. Servicing the quarry was an incline/funicular railroad, which was built to transport the large marble blocks extracted here down to the mill in East Dorset, which saved laborers from an arduous trip down the mountain.

But by the 1920s, the marble business went bust, largely because of the introduction of Portland cement, which became a cheaper and more convenient replacement. Most of the quarries in Dorset would be bought up by The Vermont Marble Company in Proctor, who then shut them down to consolidate business as demands continued to drop.

In the 1930s the ski craze hit southern Vermont, which would coax the area's shift into tourism. For a brief time, Fred Pabst of PBR fame developed a J-Bar served ski area on the slopes of Mt. Aeolus, but not long afterwards, he decided to pull the lift and move it to Bromley. In the 60s, a larger proposed ski resort conceptualized as Dorset Hollow was proposed, but was killed shortly after it's birth from tumultuous local opposition. If the resort had been built on Netop Mountain, it would offered a 3,000 foot vertical drop which would have made it the largest of any ski resort in Eastern North America. The



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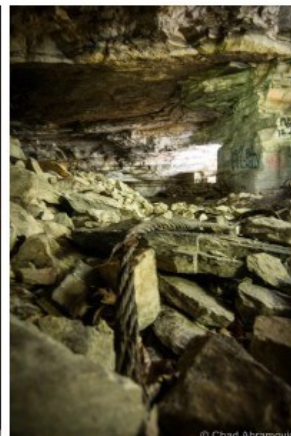
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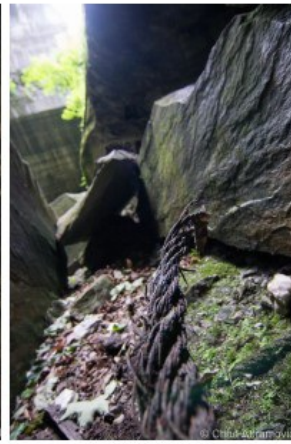
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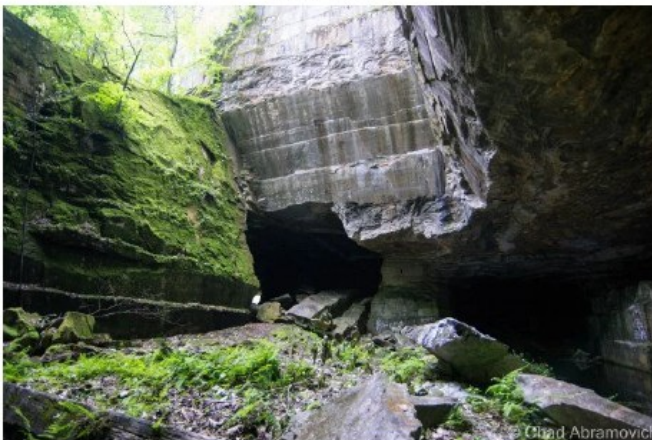
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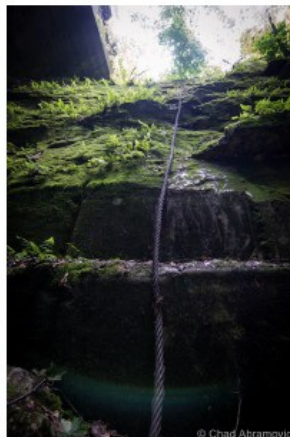
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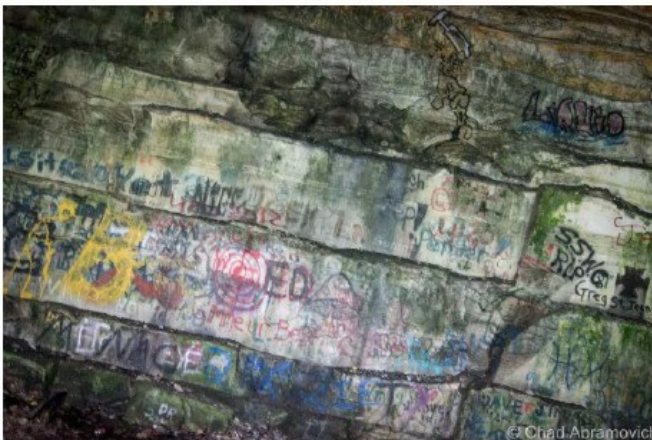
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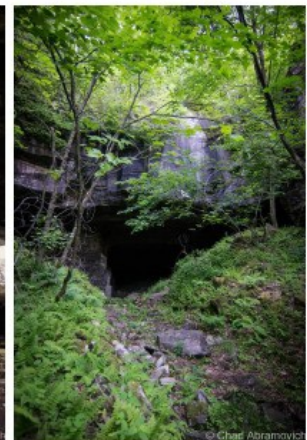
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mountains were left to be reclaimed by nature, but the marble industry has left a lasting impression here in a tangible way. One of those being the distinctive marble sidewalks that still parallel along Route 30 in Dorset village and are slippery when rainy.

Today, the assortment of quarries are popular with the outdoor adventurous type. A few locales and their sharp vertical walls draw cliff jumpers, some who like making edits of their leaps. The Norcross Quarry on Route 30 is a popular place to taunt trauma.

The mountains around Dorset Peak are unassumingly steep back country, which is combed with an expansive network of celebrated 4 wheeler trails and logging roads that draw off roaders in Jeeps, trucks and ATVs for a radius so large that many of the battered vehicles have out of state plates. Somewhere in those woods are a set of trails which are apparently so gnarly that some locals have dubbed them "World War 3".

But as I was finding out, people in the know about such places don't like to give up their locations, for the same reason that I often don't disclose the places I explore; protection. These personal sanctums are in constant danger of being ruined by disrespectful visitors, or being closed down due to potential injuries making them a jeopardy to public safety or a liability to the property owner. It's one of those double edged swords which I can sympathize with and be bummed by at the same time. Any invitation I receive is always met with me profusely expressing my gratitude.

Taking to the resourceful world of the internet, I discovered The Vermont Cavers Association and got a background on another intrepid hobby in the Green Mountain State; caving. Even though Vermont isn't all that known for it's caves, there are plenty of people here who seek them out all the same. The state's geology doesn't allow for the water permeation and underground flows that form the massive caves found farther south in Appalachia. Author and caving expert Peter Quick noted that Vermont may have around 60 caves that would stretch beyond 100 feet. But we still have a pretty impressive network here that is ardently admired (The quarries in Dorset are included on that list), with many new ones being discovered yearly. Some subterranean passages are described as squirming through twisting spaces the size of your body, which is a deal breaker for me. I'll take my adventures free of claustrophobia, above ground.

On a humid early summer's morning, I took the scenic drive down to mountainous Southern Vermont to see if I could find some of these well esteemed quarries. After driving through Victorian Wallingford, Route 7 south became linear straight, running between the Green and Taconic Ranges which closed in the highway on both sides. Part of this expanse of wilderness is within the easily missed town of Mount Tabor, which Wikipedia condemningly says is "the sneakiest speed trap in the United States" and something about dead bodies occasionally being found along Route 7. That submission may or may not be the work of a disgruntled internet user. I can't deny or confirm the corpse claim.

Points of Interest [\[edit \]](#)

Mount Tabor is noted as the "Sneakiest Speed Trap" in the United States. The 3/4 mi. stretch of Route 7 leading to Rutland and the ski area Killington holds this distinction located at a Citgo gas station (the only business on the portion that runs through this burg). Despite an almost nonexistent population, the town manages to have its own police department with a chief and first sergeant among its supervisors supported by the ticket revenues collected from passing motorists unaware of the inexplicable drop in the speed limit on the highway as it runs through Mt. Tabor.^[4] Many dead bodies have also been found this stretch of road.

via the Mount Tabor Wikipedia page.

Mathewson, an amiable and interesting gentleman, who helped point me in the direction of achieving my goal of getting up to a quarry. Inside the museum is a rather cool 3D map of Dorset, with all of the

I stopped by the Dorset Historical Society to speak with museum curator Jon

defunct quarries marked on the raised surfaces and information corresponding to each, some having amusing connotations like "Deaf Joe Quarry". He directed me to the aforementioned Freedley Quarry, and told me where to find the class D roadway that would take me there.

Freedley Quarry, First Attempt.

The Freedley Quarry is easy to get to, as long as you don't make the same mistake I did and accidentally hike up the wrong mountain, turn around and descend back down the mountain while breathing heavily, soaked in sweat and suddenly no longer caring if you found it or not.

On my first attempt, I had brought my buddy John along for the adventure. Parking in front of the aforementioned road, which in reality was only a really muddy 4 wheeler trail, we entered the woods. Not remembering if I was supposed to take a left or a right at the first fork in the trail, we took a left. What I had assumed would have been at 20 minute walk in the woods turned into a laborious climb up Mt. Aeolus while making the futile effort of swatting at endless clouds of dive bombing mosquitoes and wondering if I was going in the right direction. I now understood why a railroad was built up here over a century ago.

The forests suddenly opened up due to a massive rock slide created by quarrying efforts that vanquished a huge patch of mountainside as they tumbled. The clearing offered impressive views of Emerald Lake cozily embraced by the narrow valley of Vermont, and beyond, the Green Mountains. Directly adjacent to the clearing, I found the Folsom Quarry. Folsom was semi-interesting, really just a cavity in the upper slopes of Mt. Aeolus, it's visage bearing the scars from years of cutting, now left to the caprices of nature. But, it had some amusing points of interest. One was that Folsom was so high up in elevation (over 1,000 feet), that it never floods. The second was that it's tall vertical walls gave it the traits of a natural amphitheater. It was cool, both metaphorically, and literally, as it offered relief from late June humidity, but it wasn't the impressive catacomb like quarry I was so interested in seeing. Onward we trudged, as the trail zig-zagged up the mountain in a series of deeply rutted switchbacks. Eventually, I came across a startling find. A surveillance camera far from anything, powered by a lone solar panel, both attached to a wooden post. Nearby were some yellow diamond Nature Conservatory signs, announcing that I was now near the Aeolus Cave, and asking us to please keep away as part of an effort to combat the mysterious illness, White Nose Syndrome.

I had remembered Jon telling me about the Aeolus Cave and White Nose syndrome, which was first discovered in Upstate New York in 2007 and made it's debut in Dorset around 2008, as hikers and cavers began noticing the grisly site of scores of dead bats carpeting the floors of the mountaintop cave. The pre White Nose Syndrome Aeolus Cave was the largest hibernaculum in the northeastern United States, but the fungus wiped out about 90 percent of it's resident bat population. Today, the Nature Conservatory has designated the cave as a both a protected and research designated area.

Seeing this, I knew I had gone way too far. Descending back down the mountain, I decided that a few pizza slices accompanied by an IPA in Manchester was more appealing than trying the other fork in the trail. I was exhausted.

Freedley Quarry, Second Attempt

The rain had just came to a dull drizzle by the time we arrived back in Dorset. Somewhere under the fog was the mountain that we were going to hike, and carved into that mountain, the quarry. Parking at the now familiar trail head, me and my friend Eric embarked into the woods and damp mists. The trail split into a fork, and we took the right, hoping that this time we were on the right path. But another ten minutes into our trek up the washed out trail, we came upon yet another fork. I mentally groaned. Then



DSC_0134

I audibly groaned. How many trails were there on this mountain? Once again, the directions I had been given weren't directions, and I had no idea what to do or had any sense of bearings.

That old saying "you can't see the forest (or in this case, quarry) through the trees" was a very relevant concept at this moment. Any of these paths could potentially have lead to there. The trail actually had at least three unaccounted forks, and we hesitantly detoured on all of them, each contributing unenjoyable climbs up steep inclines serviced by trails reincarnated as mud



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slides due to the relentless succession of rain storms that had recently drenched Southern Vermont.

As we traveled deeper into the woods and past other defunct quarries that had long silted in with dirt and vegetation, I began to notice a viscous mist that was conspicuous from the rain and fog, accompanied by the wafting acrid stench of sulfur and gunpowder. That was a familiar smell. Someone was lighting off fireworks, and they were near enough where the expelled smolder could reach us. We both assumed that there were other people at the quarry engaging in

some festive intimacy, and mentally prepared ourselves to deal with them as we would attempt to photograph the place. The supposition that we weren't alone on the mountain was confirmed when a few people passed us on the trail riding in Jeeps, some exchanging greetings by waving, and others by flicking cigarette butts at us. I suddenly felt awkwardly out of place, being the only folks on foot up here.

Soon, we came across the creepy dampened ruins of what appeared to be some sort of old shack or hunting camp, which looks like it was the victim of a home made firework and exploded at some point, interspersing twisted and disintegrating artifacts throughout the overgrown brush along the trail. Among



DSC_0157

© Chad Abramovich

the debris were a scattering of beer cans and food wrappers, which told us that even way up here, people come and party/litter.

Ahead, we noticed a four way in the trail and could feel the air become a bit cooler, which was a good indication. To our left, the black mouth of the quarry soon became discernible through a thick strand of white Birches. The smoke was incredibly thick now, and as I slowed down to survey the area, I saw what I had expected to see; there was a rather large bonfire crackling where the cave met the open air. We also noticed the producers of the fire; three slovenly

people who appeared to be in their late teens, two boys and a girl, and all of them were wearing hunter orange. For some reason beyond my rational, this seemed to make me a bit uneasy. The weather on the mountain was viciously sultry, far too hot to be clad in full body hunter orange. And why would you wear it in the summer when hunting season isn't for another few months? We observed as the two fellows headed into the complete blackness of the cave, and the girl sat on what appeared to be a rock and plopped herself startlingly close to the fire.

At a complete standstill, I was about to ask Eric how he felt about approaching the cave and trying to take some photographs despite their presence there, but then came the pivotal point of our encounter. A strange sound came from the dark crevices from within the cave, what sounded like the wail of a goat. We waited in confused and uneasy silence. As our eyes strained for answers, we heard that terrible noise again, only this time, the situation became clear. It wasn't a goat. Those guys were the ones making the noises.

We took a few steps backwards now, a bit alarmed, and suddenly not wanting to be detected. The two guys, completely unperturbed, continued their strange ritual of making those horrible goat noises inside the cave, loudly reverberating and making empty echos off the walls that sounded like something from a hellish nightmare. Later, me and Eric would both agree that what we had heard was the weirdest noise both of us have ever encountered. It sounded inhuman, and yet, we both knew it came from the mouth of one.

It was now when a new detail that I had overlooked before, came to light. None of them were talking to one another. Other than their contrived lunacy, none of them were actually speaking to one another, and wouldn't for the entire time that we had stuck around. Then, all went silent, apart from the crackling of their fire.

One of them started to maniacally whistle, followed by a few minutes of uncomfortable silence, and then the other guy whistled back in the same manor. This pattern repeated for a few more minutes, followed by the ominous goat noises once again resuming. We waited there, obscured by thick brush and birch trees, for twenty minutes, partially because that the bizarre show that had been developing before us was somehow too tantalizing to walk away from. Then, the girl, who was still crouching by the fire, started making an awful wailing noise, that sounded much like a baby that was in great distress, and this went on for several minutes as we gazed at them from our hiding place with intermittent glances at one another, completely befuddled. The goat noises started back up, and still, none of them were talking to one another.

My disappointment couldn't be contained. We were so frustratingly close to our destination, and yet,

the ghastly activity coming from the quarry ensured I didn't dare make a move to get any closer. I was far too nervous at this point. A large quarry this secluded was a perfect place for multifarious clandestine activity. Sometimes, the motives of sentient beings can be vexing. We spoke in quiet whispers, and made the decision to get the hell out of there. Just as we began to walk backwards, the mountainsides vibrated violently and grey sulfurous smoke spewed through the trees. They were now lighting off some heavy duty fireworks inside the cave.

Walking back down the trail, I couldn't help thinking that we had somehow avoided some great danger, and a feeling of sweet relief crept over me. Not long after hastily retreating, we ran into two middle aged looking guys traveling up the trail in a Jeep. We stepped aside to let them pass, but they smiled at us and stopped, and both parties exchanged greetings.

"What are you guys up too?" the gentleman behind the wheel opened with, his eyes falling on our cameras. "We wanted to check out the Freedley Quarry" I answered. "Oh yeah? What'd you guys think?" asked the man in the passenger seat. "Don't know, we never made it". Both of them looked at us quizzically, probably because we were walking from the direction that the quarry was in, so we told them what we had just encountered, and why we turned around. The guy behind the wheel just looked at us like he was in a condescending state of awe, then said as a matter-of-factly; "well, it's a free country", and drove off. In all the excitement, I had forgotten it was the fourth of July.



DSC_0160_pe



DSC_0172

Freedley Quarry, Third Attempt

This time, it was my friend Jay that accompanied me, who found my previous failed attempts and strange encounter pretty amusing. Only this time, we made it to the quarry without and setbacks, and spent three pleasant hours exploring it's eye



DSC_0173

magnetic catacombs, flooded passages and exquisite shaft like opening that bore straight upwards through the roof of the mountainside we were underneath. Not surprisingly, the insides of the massive line diminishing space were colorfully graffitied on just about any available surface, and were a mixture of the usual things you'd expect to see graffitied somewhere. Names and dates, slanderous accusations, original artwork and conjurings of the more vulgar variety. The quarry floors were littered with trash and strangely, nails, and rubbed black from numerous tire treads of all the vehicle activity

inside the cave. In the winter, the flooded insides freeze over, and people snowmobile up the mountain and utilize the quarry as an awesome skating rink.

Eventually, we were loosing daylight, and the quarry began to take on a more eerie pallor as the



DSC_0177_pe

© Chad Abramovich

temperature dropped and the interior became a dark place haunted by the cacophony of dripping water. I'm glad I stayed persistent.



DSC_0181_pe

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DSC_0189_pe

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DSC_0185

© Chad Abramovich



DSC_0191

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Obscure Vermont



DSC_0193_pe



DSC_0203_pe



DSC_0214



DSC_0295



DSC_0404



DSC_0250_pe

Bite from 'unidentified sea creature' in Indian River sends child to hospital

clickorlando.com

Posted: 3:08 PM, May 02, 2016 Updated: 3:29 PM, May 15, 2016

BREVARD COUNTY, Fla. - A 10-year-old bitten on the ankle by an unidentified sea creature in the Indian River Monday afternoon was treated by paramedics and taken to a nearby hospital, News 6 partner Florida Today reports.

The incident happened about noon at Long Point Park which sits just north of the Sebastian Inlet.

Other witnesses at the park described the injury as two-small pin prick-type scrapes.

"He came out of the water with the bite to the ankle," said Don Walker, spokesman for Brevard County Fire Rescue.

The child was quickly treated at the scene by Brevard County Fire Rescue paramedics.

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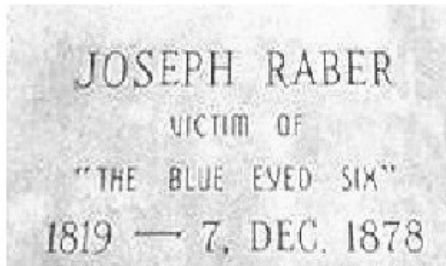
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Hauntingly PENNSYLVANIA™

The Blue-Eyed Six:

Are these murderers still roaming Moonshine Church?



Fort Indiantown Gap straddles the Central Pennsylvania counties of Lebanon and Dauphin. An active training base, area residents have become accustomed to the whirring of helicopter blades overhead, and the occasional booms of live artillery. "The Gap," as locals call it, is just an ordinary military installation. But for television producers, paranormal investigators, and curious researchers, it is one of the

best-known haunted sites in the nation. These visitors are drawn by one of the saddest events in the area's history: the murder of a pauper by a group of men who will forever be known as "The Blue-Eyed Six."

By the 1870s, the threat of Indian attack upon Gap settlers had long since passed. Many families, no longer needing the protection offered by forts, made their homes among the thick trees at the foot of the Blue Mountains. None of these families had a lot of money but one man, widower Joseph Raber, was particularly destitute. When odd jobs, hunting and fishing weren't enough to ward off starvation, neighbors often came to Raber's aid. These same neighbors were surprised to learn, after the poor man slipped and drowned in the creek near his home, that his life had been insured for \$8,000. This highly suspect circumstance also caught the attention of local authorities who uncovered a most shocking and grisly conspiracy.

At the time of Raber's death, it was a common (although despicable) practice for one person to take out a life insurance policy on another - even if there was absolutely no familial, personal or business relationship between the two individuals. The need to prove a valid "insurable interest" came too late for Raber whose six neighbors set about benefiting from policies on his life.

In July 1878, four of the six conspirators (Israel Brandt, Josiah Hummel, Henry Wise and George Zechman) met at Brandt's hotel. They agreed that each man would purchase a life insurance policy on Raber. Such policies were necessary, they told insurance agent George W. Schweinhard, because they planned to care for Raber throughout his remaining years and would eventually need the payout to cover his burial expenses. If the insurance agent harbored any questions, he apparently kept them to himself - as did Raber who seemingly never doubted that the mens' intentions were sincere.

Yet, for all of their cold calculations, none of these four conspirators was interested in the

actual task of dispatching the old man. For this they enlisted two more men: Charles Drews and Frank Stichler. Though they did not take out their own policies on Raber's life, Drews was promised \$300. He, in turn, promised Stichler \$100.

On December 7, 1878, Drews visited Raber. He invited the old man to come to his shack for tobacco. Drews lead the way, while Raber followed. At some point, Stichler joined them.

To get to Drews' shack, the men had to cross the 12-foot-wide Indiantown Creek via a plank stretching between its shores. When Raber reached the mid-way point, Stichler threw him into the water. The creek being only 17 inches deep, both he and Drews struggled to hold the old man down long enough to successfully drown him - a task they finally accomplished. Like killing Raber, though, things became much more difficult than the murderers ever imagined.

Unfortunately for all six men, Brandt was a talkative drunk. He bragged to the coroner about the life insurance policies, and even offered the medical examiner \$20 to quickly rule the death accidental.

Within four months, all six men were indicted for the murder of Joseph Raber. At the end of their eight-day trial, all were convicted. A newspaper reporter covering the case noticed the similarity of eye color and dubbed the killers "The Blue-Eyed Six."

On August 18, 1879, Drews, Stichler, Brandt and Hummel were sentenced to death. Zechman, the only defendant to hire an attorney, was granted a new trial. Wise, who had confessed two days earlier, enjoyed a very brief reprieve.

Charles Drews and Frank Stichler, the hired "hit men," met the noose first. They were hanged on November 14, 1879.

On May 13, 1880, Brandt, Hummel, and Wise were hanged in the prison yard on Eighth Street in Lebanon.

George Zechman was eventually acquitted and died in 1906. He was buried at Sattazahn's Church and Cemetery, less than 20 feet from Josiah Hummel. Frank Stichler was buried on his family's land. Henry Wise was laid to rest in Green Point Cemetery. Charles Drews and Israel Brandt are buried side-by-side in Mt. Lebanon Cemetery.

Contrary to popular belief, only Joseph Raber is buried in Moonshine Church cemetery - a house of worship named not for distilled alcohol, but rather the unusual surname of the family that financed its construction. Today the church sits on Fort Indiantown Gap land, and is the site most frequently visited by ghost hunters from cable TV networks such as SyFy.

Stories of spectral activity at Moonshine Church are as varied as they are numerous. Some say cars, if turned off, won't re-start. Others swear to seeing ghosts peering in through the church windows. Claims of multiple murders on the site are unfounded, yet persistent. A headless horseman reportedly rides past the church - although the reason for such peculiar activity could not be guessed. There are even claims that an evil Indian spirit named Red Devil haunts the church, a visage as confusing and baseless as a horseman with no head.

By far, however, the most oft-repeated claim is the sighting of six sets of glowing, blue eyes floating through the Moonshine Church cemetery. Is it "The Blue-Eyed Six" coming to beg for Joseph Raber's forgiveness? Or, is it just the kind of folklore that so often serves as mankind's coping mechanism when faced with such a brutal act as murder?

Hauntingly PENNSYLVANIA™ can't say. Perhaps one of the many paranormal investigators who receive the Fort's permission to research there will someday provide irrefutable proof, one way or the other. ❖❖

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'Blue ice' from passing plane blamed for near-miss, gaping hole in roof of Nepean home

2016/03/23

cbc.ca



By Stu Mills, CBC News Posted: Mar 23, 2016 5:00 AM ET Last

Updated: Mar 23, 2016 5:36 AM ET



An Ottawa woman believes a chunk of frozen sewage

Daylight is visible through a hole in the roof of the Ottawa home of Stephanie Moore's mother. (Supplied)

plummeted from a passing aircraft and punched a hole through the roof of her mother's Nepean home early Sunday morning, just metres from where she lay sleeping.

Stephanie Moore had just returned from a trip to Cuba when she says she was awakened at 2 a.m. on Sunday by a "giant crashing noise."

The 36-year-old teacher with the Ottawa Catholic School Board jumped out of bed, turned on a light and soon discovered a gaping hole in the ceiling of the hallway outside the bedroom where she had been sleeping.

'My head was only about 12 or 15 feet away.' - Stephanie Moore

"My head was only about 12 or 15 feet away," said Moore.

She quickly discovered pink insulation, drywall ceiling material and shattered bits of wood on the hallway floor, along with a puddle of water. Moore immediately called the insurance company.

'Went right through roof'

The light of day revealed a hole about one metre in diameter in the hall ceiling, with insulation, drywall and wood hanging precariously from the large gash.

Photographs taken in the attic also show damage to the roof planking and the shingles, and daylight can be seen shining through the hole.



Damage to the ceiling, but no sign of a projectile or evidence of the cause. (Supplied)

"At first I thought it was just damage to the ceiling. I couldn't tell it went right through the roof when I first saw it," Moore said.

Moore said both her insurance adjuster and the roof repair expert who came to her mother's home Sunday called it "the strangest thing they have ever seen."

There's no evidence to suggest that a tree or branch caused the damage and there was no ice or snow on the roof when it happened.

The roofing specialist who inspected the damage said there was no rotting wood in the roof, and that before the incident, at least, the exterior shell of Moore's mother's house was solid.

'Blue ice' suspected

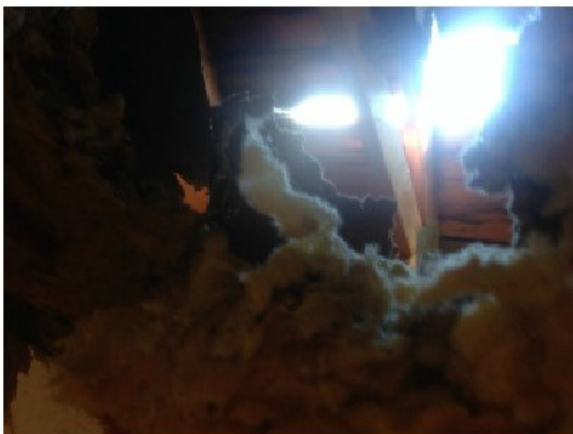
It's the roofer who suggested "blue ice" as the likeliest source of the damage, since a meteorite strike — though it might cause similar damage — would leave behind a rock or mineral element in the debris.

Blue ice, named for the colour of the disinfectant used in the sewage systems of commercial aircraft, is the term for frozen waste that can leak and break away from planes while they're aloft.

Though pilots don't have the ability to intentionally release the holding tanks of onboard lavatories, leaks are possible and the mixture of human waste and liquid disinfectant that freezes in the cold air of high altitude can plummet earthward like a frozen bomb.

The roofer who inspected Moore's mother's home said blue ice has been known to strike homes and then melt on impact, leaving little evidence as to the cause of the damage.

In 2008, the Transportation Safety Board concluded that ice that crashed through roof of a Calgary woman's home had come from an airplane flying overhead.



The projectile shattered even the board planking of the roof of Stephanie Moore's mother's house. (Supplied)

Moore said she plans to call the Transportation Safety Board about the damage. The home is in the Merivale Road and Viewmount Drive area of Nepean, about three kilometres northwest of the Ottawa Macdonald–Cartier International Airport.

That proximity, along with the absence of any other obvious explanation for the damage and the fact that her childhood home is under several flight paths has Moore convinced that blue ice is indeed the cause.

Transport Canada 'looking into' incident

Transport Canada said in a statement Tuesday the ministry was aware of the incident and is looking into it.

"The department takes all reports of possible debris coming from aircraft very seriously. Every reported incident is investigated by Transport Canada officials," said spokesperson Natasha Gauthier.

Canadian Aviation Regulations prohibit creating a hazard by dropping an object from an aircraft in flight, according to Transport Canada.

Moore checked the flight tracking software planefinder.net where she determined that the only plane flying above her Nepean home at 2 a.m. on Sunday morning was a courier aircraft registered to the logistics and shipping company DHL, which is a division of Deutsche Post DHL Group. She hasn't reached out to DHL.

Moore has preserved some of the wood fragments from the roof so that they might be analyzed, and she has also saved some of the water that leaked through the hole for about five minutes following the initial impact in the hopes that it will help determine if the strike was from frozen lavatory water.

Workers added a temporary repair patch to Moore's house on Sunday and the repair company was set to provide an estimate on Tuesday for the cost of repairing a substantial section of the roof.

Moore has been told to expect a bill "in the thousands," since planking, shingles, insulation and drywall all need to be replaced, though she said she's confident her mother's insurance company will cover the cost of repairs.

Moore said though the incident has left her shaken, it could have been worse. For now, the teacher says she's trying to make the most of the unusual event.

"I teach kids Grades 2 and 3 and I told them the story today and they were completely enthralled by it. They said, 'It's aliens!'"

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Finally! British Police Catch Big Foot

huffingtonpost.com

HUFFPOST WEIRD NEWS

Finally! British Police Catch Big Foot**Mystery solved!**

04/26/2016 12:19 pm ET

- Steven Hoffer Senior Editor, The Huffington Post

Something strange is afoot.

Authorities in the Wandsworth borough of London were tickled on Saturday when an officer photographed a giant foot on wheels cruising along the sidewalk.

The police shared the photo of a man wearing a silver suit and helmet standing inside the heel of the massive foot. A woman in a captain's suit is seen standing on the base of the vehicle.

Spotted near Balham Tube, a typical day in Wandsworth...(anyone have an explanation?) ^469WW pic.twitter.com/9gt1YpAzgl

— Wandsworth Police (@MPSWandsworth) April 23, 2016

Police didn't have to kick in any doors to learn the backstory in this case. Even without any giant nail clippers in sight, there's a perfectly logical explanation.

A few hours after police put the call out, the Twitter account for the Wandsworth Fringe Festival shared a front-view photo of the foot and its brave commander.

#bigfoot out and about for @wworthfringe keeping you on your toes
#wafchat @SillyBureau pic.twitter.com/uck2msUAVi

— Wandsworth Fringe (@wworthfringe) April 23, 2016

According to the Wandsworth Guardian, the festival's Ministry of Silly Ideas built the giant foot to promote this year's event, which starts on May 6.

Foot-age of the foot cruising around town and playing a little music was also shared on Twitter.

@wworthfringe @SillyBureau With the music! @wandsworth_arts
@wandsworthnews pic.twitter.com/faLCMKeg9T

— Kate D (@K4TE_D) April 23, 2016

There were no reports regarding whether the giant foot smelled as bad as one imagines a giant foot would.

It certainly looks a bit like another famous British foot.

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Serial killer William Burke's skeleton goes on display - BBC News

bbc.com

**Serial killer William Burke's skeleton goes on display**

• 8 hours ago

*The tour will include a three-dimensional image of Burke's skeleton*

The skeleton of murderer William Burke is to go on show online for the first time.

Burke, along with his accomplice William Hare, killed 16 people in 19th Century Edinburgh and sold their bodies for medical research.

His remains will be included in a virtual tour developed by the Anatomical Museum at Edinburgh University.

The tour can be accessed through a new interactive application.

Other highlights of the tour include 1,500 human skulls and the death masks of famous figures such as Oliver Cromwell, Sir Walter Scott and Napoleon Bonaparte.

Until 2012, only medical students and staff were allowed access to the museum.

Image caption

In recent years, the public have been allowed to visit on one day each month.

The new virtual tour extends this public access, offering 360-degree views with the ability to zoom in and view objects of interest in detail.

Prof Gordon Findlater of the University of Edinburgh said: "It seemed to me to be a great shame to have such a wonderful collection of anatomical and other artefacts locked away from public viewing.

"We started opening the museum to the public so that people in and around Edinburgh would have the opportunity to view the exhibits.

"Now, with this app, anyone with an interest in our collection can access it from anywhere in the world and see it just as those visiting on an open day sees it."

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Butterflies of Doom - Haunted Ohio Books

hauntedohiobooks.com

This is the official website of the 7-volume Haunted Ohio series and the Ghosts of the Past series by Ohio author Chris Woodyard

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1811 Stonewood Dr. Dayton, OH 45432-4002 • invisiblei@aol.com

Butterflies of Doom

We are all familiar with birds as omens of death: mysterious doves appearing in sick-rooms, owls hooting outside a house of death, or robins hurling themselves at windows. But there is another winged creature that more rarely presages doom: the butterfly. Rather oddly, for all its reputation as a symbol of the soul, the butterfly is not often found as a death omen. Perhaps it is more a conductor of souls, if you believe these anecdotes.

(733.5) *From Mrs S. March 29th, 1892.*

"I once dreamed that a large black butterfly was hovering over my husband as he lay in bed. I awoke and saw, by the aid of the nightlight, the butterfly of my dream fluttering over him. I called the servant and together we tried to kill it. I struck at it with my handkerchief and apparently succeeded in my object, but all our endeavours to find the body of the insect failed. The doors and windows were all closed and it could not have escaped. It was very large and could not have remained invisible. The black woman saw the butterfly as I did, till I struck at it. We are of opinion, as we searched so carefully, that it was merely hallucinatory."

(We need not here discuss the alleged sharing of the hallucination by the black woman, of which we only know at second-hand. Shared or "collective" hallucinations are treated of in Chapter XV.)

With regard to the form taken by the hallucination, the collector, Professor Alexander, writes : —

"According to a superstition widely spread in Brazil the black butterfly is supposed to be a sign of death. I have heard several tales similar to the account given [here] that tend to show that hallucinations are often shaped by popular beliefs."

From the Society for Psychical Research's *Census of Hallucinations*.

But did Mr S actually *die*? How could they leave out the most important point?

Brazilian Folk-lore

During the journey of the express train from Rio de Janeiro to Sao Paulo, on the 18th of last month, a large black butterfly entered a first—class car, and hovered about in such a way as to excite the apprehensions of a lady who was on her way to see a sister who was gravely ill, for it is a common Brazilian superstition that the black butterfly forbodes death. A gentleman in the car sought to quiet the fears of the lady, and laughed at such presentiments. He then attempted to drive the unwelcome visitor out of the car, but the butterfly at once began hovering about him in a most persistent manner. Shortly after he began to feel ill, and in a brief time was a corpse. The man really died of heart disease, hastened probably by his exertions to catch the butterfly; but it will be difficult, says the *Rio News*, to make many people believe otherwise than that the poor insect possessed some malign influence which brought death upon him.

William E. A. Axon. Fern Bank, Higher Broughton, Manchester.

Notes and Queries: For Readers and Writers, Collectors and Librarians, 17 July 1880, p. 46

THE WONDERFUL BUTTERFLY.

In connection with death many beautiful incidents have occurred, the most peculiar of which will be given. The *Jersey City Journal* speaks of a physician who resided in that city at one time, who had won considerable fame from the successful cures he had made in medicine and surgery. Whenever one of his patients died, no matter where he was, what time of day or night, a small white butterfly came to him, and flitted about until it attracted his notice, when it departed. The moment the Doctor saw the little winged messenger of death, he was at once made aware of the demise of the patient; and if at night the warning came to him, he invariably remained in his office in the morning in order to give a certificate of death. The first time the Doctor ever saw this butterfly, was while he was looking at the form of a deceased child; the butterfly alighted on its breast, and there remained, slowly raising its wings up and down until the body was closed in its little coffin. On one occasion, while the Doctor was attending a patient in Park Place, the butterfly entered the window and commenced flitting about his head. He looked up at it, and one of the ladies in the room, thinking it annoyed him, said: "Oh! let it alone; it will soon burn its wings by the blaze of the gas." "No, it won't," replied the Doctor. "It has come on a mission, and will soon disappear. I have just lost a patient, and in the evening I will be called upon for a certificate of death." Sure enough, the next morning the father of the child that had died the night before called, and notified him of the loss of his little one. This is only one of the many instances where the Doctor has received this strange visitation, and kept a record of the circumstances, besides that of calling the attention of those present to the fact of the butterfly's warning of death among his patients. Premonitions of death are of common occurrence, being usually impressed upon the mind through the instrumentality of dreams or visions.

The Encyclopaedia of Death and Life in the Spirit-world, John Reynolds Francis, (Chicago: The Progressive Thinker Publishing House, 1906)

Just today I read about a neo-neolithic long barrow, the first one built in 5,500 years, where the ashes of the dead will be sealed in stone niches. One of the first to be placed there was a woman whose husband said that a butterfly chose the niche for her ashes. He had seen butterflies in the house the day his wife had passed away and when he saw the butterfly in the barrow, he viewed it as an omen.

Have you chased the bright elusive butterfly of death? Please share with Chriswoodyard8 AT gmail.com, who gets uneasy when big black moths batter against the window in her office.

More often the butterfly is seen as symbol of hope or as a visitation from a dead loved one, as in the stories on this page.

Posted by

Chris Woodyard

on September 23, 2014 in Animal Tales, Death, Folklore, News, Prophecies, Psychic Research, Strange Deaths, Victorian, Wonders and Curiosities and tagged Brazilian folklore, butterflies, butterflies as death omens, death omens, premonitions of death, prophecy, tokens of death

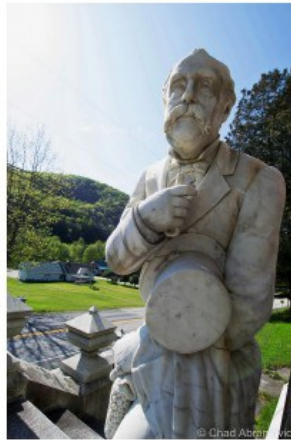
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Logo

Cemetery Safaris and Green Mountain Memento Mori.

Posted on April 27, 2016 By Chad Abramovich



Fays' Corners Cemetery, photograph by Kali Yuga. Used with permission. I visited in 2011, heading back up to college after spring break. I declined sitting on his lap. The handsome Bowman mansion, restored and called "Laurel Hall" – as seen from the front steps of his across the street mausoleum. I would have snapped a better picture, but all of my weird detours had made me late and I needed to rush back to Burlington. Here is a neat visual of what your money might have gotten you – should you have decided to purchase one of these special graves. It seems that this model comes with what looks like a periscope, but in actuality, the person buried could spin the handles and it would turn above, letting who ever came and checked on the cemetery that the person moved. The interesting grave topped with a curious sleeping baby, which may be a metaphor, is located in the only cemetery in tiny Lyndon Center. It was just a short yet freezing walk down College Hill from my dorm at Lyndon State College to snap a few photos of it, then retreat back to my room in search of coffee. This impressionistic headstone found in the vanished town of West Bolton

Legacy is one of those nouns that we as humans are all united by. While all of us will leave some sort of mark behind, many of us mull over just what that will be. How will you be remembered?

Some of us make our mark in life through death, and on rare occasions, certain people achieve beyond that, and find themselves exhibitioners of the long sought after status of immortality. Humans have collectively been searching for ways to cheat our other unity as a species since we first came into existence; death. And I have to say, we're a pretty creative bunch, and have gone about it in a variety of forms that are sure to keep anthropologists and storytellers like myself pretty busy with the secrets that they keep. More interestingly – it's actually been achieved before, but not quite in the way that we might have expected it, that is, it was successful *after* the postmortem.

Sometimes these surviving inclusions of this manifesto can be found in your local cemetery, memorialized in crafted monuments and in the psyche of regional denizens until enough time has passed for history to forget – if it ever does. Often, someone's final resting place is our immortal legacy, and what has been left behind is what lives on for generations after our physical bodies return to the earth we're buried in. The same concept can be said for the forsaken places I explore.

Vermont isn't short of memorable memorialism, a few of which I've highlighted in this blog post. Ethan Allen's landmark grave in Burlington is a soaring vanity project of the state's most pronounced hero, commemorated with a



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The Montpelier and Barre region seems to be a bulls-eye for some of the state's most interesting memento mori, which may be one of the many reasons why some Vermonters refer to their capital as "Montpeculiar". Included in this interesting region's points of interest is Barre's celebrity Hope Cemetery. Barre-ites discovered over a century ago that the city was literally built on top of a mother lode of a valuable granite vein that was so robust and unique, it's incredibly resistant to deterioration, discoloration and great for construction projects. That stone made the town so famous that it drew sculptors and stone cutters from around the globe – a good chunk from Italy due to sour economics back home. As the city's residents died, the locals did what they did best and sculpted some very interesting monuments in their honor that now proudly decorate the cemetery off Maple Avenue – the commemorations ranging from incredible works of funerary art to the kitschy.

Regardless, the thought of an "immortal" man in the capital region only amused me more, as this wouldn't be the first time that this trope has played out in this part of the state. Over a century ago, it was sensationalized in the Washington County region in 1887 when an article was published in the defunct newspaper, *The Montpelier Argus and Patriot*, in which was a compelling and startling tale of poor Vermont hill farmers keeping their loved ones alive through the grueling winters by inducing forced hibernation, via some strange Yankee magic, which emanated like a contagion shotgun blast from the hills.

In the strange account told by a mysterious first and one time only contributor known as A.M., he dug up the story in the pages of his uncle William's journal that told a rather gothic and macabre series of events said to be practiced deep in the Vermont hills north of Montpelier. Wretchedly poor Vermont hill farmers had contrived a solution ensuring that the weakest and most vulnerable members of their family could survive the state's grueling winters without straining the already meager food rations. Life in Vermont's mountains was hard, and often death came early.

The chosen participants would drink a special potion – the ingredients a closely guarded secret – and would then be placed inside a large pine box that would be lined with straw, before a wooden lid was placed over it and weighed down by rocks to keep predators out. Once the winter freeze came, the buried family members would literally sleep out the winter in a frozen state. When the Spring thaw softened up the ground, they would be dug up, placed in a steaming bath lined with Hemlock boughs, and as their muscles twitched and color came back to their pallor, they would be ready to face the summer with vigor. In theory anyways. And according to A.M., his uncle not only knew about it, he was *invited* to watch the process, and he transcribed all that he saw in his journal, documenting the bizarre.

At the time, the *The Montpelier Argus and Patriot* had the most circulation of any of the state's newspapers, meaning that plenty of Vermonters must have been horrified by it, but even more tantalizingly, no follow ups about the weird story were ever printed, nor were any letters to the editor. The strange tale probably would have vanished into obscurity if it wasn't for a Bridgewater gentleman accidentally finding the newspaper article clipping tucked away in the scrapbook of Hannah F. Stevens, his mother, 52 years later.

On May 24, 1939, the *Rutland Herald* revived the old yarn and printed A.M.'s story word for word, and explained that no one knew its source. Interest immediately picked up. The Boston Globe published something on it 4 days later, and it was forever stuck to the flypaper of New England folklore. *Yankee Magazine*, *The Farmers Almanac*, and *Vermont Life* soon followed, attempting to cash in on the public's desire to satiate their thirst for this baffling story.

Eventually, writer and lecturer Roland W. Robbins had managed to track the story's origins in the winter of 1949-1950, and was finally able to give *A.M.* an identity; Allen Morse, an untypical dairy farmer from Calais who was born in 1835 and died in 1917. Morse's granddaughter, a Mrs. Mabel E. Hynes of Agawam, Massachusetts was able to reveal more of the mystery. She recalled him telling her that story several times growing up, perhaps influenced by his interest in spiritualism like many Vermonters of the time. Before the distractions of technology, Vermont farmers entertained themselves by "yarnin", or, seeing who could tell the best lurid tall tale. Allen Morse had considerable talent, and his brother in law William Noyes, aka Uncle William, would often have rounds against one another and test run their tales at family picnics. Morse's account of the frozen hill folk was his matchless achievement.

But it wasn't him that submitted the tale to paper, he never even wrote it down. It was Mrs. Hynes's mother, who in 1887 was working for the *The Montpelier Argus and Patriot*, and secretly arranged to have "grandpa's yarn" published on Morse's next birthday, December 21, 1887. Morse was delighted, and was glad that they had kept his identity a mystery, for anyone that knew him would have labeled it as a hoax immediately, which may have very well put a moratorium to this great regional folk tale. It became so compelling that even the highly respected journal *Scientific American* picked up on it around 1900. Other scientists were interested into researching just how peoples bodies would respond and survive to lower temperatures, and eventually, Cryonic Societies began forming around the country, all interested in the feasibility of resurrecting frozen humans entombed in capsules chilled to -321 degrees via liquid nitrogen.

Regardless of it's faux origins, this cryptic fable left an enduring footprint on local culture that is still spoken about today, especially after being revived again when author Joseph Citro retold the great tale in his book, *Green Mountains Dark Tales*, and later in *Weird New England*, which was where I discovered it. But as for the grave of Mr. Edward McNalty, Could some Yankee mountain magic actually be at work here?

Taking a drive through the bustling crowds of Downtown Montpelier and up a pothole chocked road into the hills to the cemetery in question, I found the tell tale gravestone. Edward McNalty. Born 1857. Died...



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There it was. So, what's the story here?

As much fun as it might be to romanticize about an immortal being existing in the mortal grind somewhere in Vermont (after all, New England isn't a stranger to disturbing tales of immortal men and their misdeeds – like New Hampshire's dreadful Dr. Benton, one of my favorite regional narratives), the actual story is planted firmly in logistics. As it turns out, according to the limited information I was able to dig up, the mysterious Edward McNalty was born in Moretown, Vermont in November of 1861, not 1857 – they made a mistake on the headstone but it was never corrected. He would eventually enter the workforce as a railroad section man. Edward would marry Illinois born Rosetta Smith on January 7, 1896 at the age of 44, and settled in Washington, Vermont, according to the census of 1930. For both, it was their second marriage, and this marriage produced no children.

Edward died of pneumonia in Montpelier on December 28, 1935. Because his second marriage never bore any kids, his children from his first marriage decided to bury him next to their mom as opposed to his second wife, which explains the missing date of death on the headstone.

And at the end of the day, this amusing gravestone at least offers a good story, and maybe will spark the most curious of imaginations.

A vignette into early Vermont life.

Sometimes, cemeteries can give us clues into our past. Three barely discernible graves deep within the national forest of Chittenden greet you by surprise within the weeds, and are the only things left to tell whoever is passing by that there was once a town here over a hundred years ago.



Fays' Corners Cemetery, photograph by Kali Yuga. Used with permission. I visited in 2011, heading back up to college after spring break. I declined sitting on his lap. The handsome Bowman mansion, restored and called "Laurel Hall" – as seen from the front steps of his across the street mausoleum. I would have snapped a better picture, but all of my weird detours had made me late and I needed to rush back to Burlington. Here is a neat visual of what your money might have gotten you – should you have decided to purchase one of these special graves. It seems that this model comes with what looks like a periscope, but in actuality, the person buried could spin the handles and it would turn above, letting whoever came and checked on the cemetery that the person moved. The interesting grave topped with a curious sleeping baby, which may be a metaphor, is located in the only cemetery in tiny Lyndon Center. It was just a short yet freezing walk down College Hill from my dorm at Lyndon State College to snap a few photos of it, then retreat back to my room in search of coffee.

This impressionistic



This impressionistic headstone found in the vanished town of West Bolton tells the observer how dangerous childbirth, or being a young child could be in Vermont over a century ago, and how much death early Vermonters were actually accustomed to. Thanks to advances in modern medicine, people are living longer lives nowadays.

To finish this entry off, I wanted to include one of my favorite cemetery tombstones I've come across so far. Embarking on a random road trip with friend and talented local artist Sam Balling, we traveled the beautiful state route 125 up over Vermont's green mountain spine which brought us through tiny Ripton, which local lore says its name comes from it's land being "ripped" from other Addison County towns to form the new town, but it's name less interestingly comes from Connecticut, relating to the first named grantee. The town averages an elevation of near 3,000 feet and is surrounded by mountains. Heading towards Middlebury Gap, a pass between the mountains that allows motorists to drop down the other side into Hancock, there is an old cemetery near the Robert Frost Wayside Wilderness of the Green Mountain National Forest. The small burial ground is interspersed with old gnarled trees and centuries old gravestones that jut from the pine needle fallen earth like broken teeth wearing the different hues of aging. In the background, stark grey ridge lines barren and almost foreboding in their late autumn death, hemmed in the cemetery in isolation. I loved it.

This simplistic headstone illustrates the tragic demise of two brothers and strangers in detailed brevity. Winfield H. was killed by an overturned load of lumber, and Perley H. was killed by the explosion of a cannon, a vignette into how different, and deadly life was for Vermonters settling up in the mountains over a century ago.

Sometimes having a peaceful, out of the way location can also be a place's undoing, especially when for whatever reason, it inspires spectral fodder and monstrous legends. But I'm always very interested in these tales that surpass strange. If you're curious about more local lore involving cemeteries (or indirectly involving cemeteries), check out an older blog post I wrote up years ago, featuring two stories that saw the glow of a computer screen for the first time when I wrote them down.

While we're on the topic of cemeteries, here's a link that I thought was very cool; Atlas Obscura's Guide to Cemetery Symbolism

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Ripton, VT

Obscure Vermont

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/* Copyright 2014 Evernote Corporation. All rights reserved. */
.en-markup-crop-options { top: 18px !important; left: 50% !important;
margin-left: -100px !important; width: 200px !important; border: 2px rgba(255,255,255,.38) solid !important; border-radius: 4px
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.en-markup-crop-options div div:first-of-type { margin-left: 0px !important; }
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giant spindly pedestal topped by a rather valiant looking life size statue of Allen himself, standing his limited ground mute and stubbornly. But the real mind boggle is that no one is sure if Ethan Allen is actually buried underneath his own monument, and if he's not, where did he wind up?

Thanks to a 19th century Middlebury millionaire who was striving to start a cabinet of curiosities to awe his wealthy friends with, there is now a 4,000 year old Egyptian mummy buried in Middlebury's west cemetery. And, there is rumored to be a forgotten cemetery near Fays' Corners where all of it's inhabitants

unintentionally became members of the exclusive club of dead remembered as they wound up as opposed to who they were, at the end of their line. The cemetery was long ago removed by a local farmer who wanted to expand his haying field. The graves were later returned, or at least re-propped back up, but the farmer had forgotten their original orientation, so he lined them up alphabetically. Today the tiny bone yard is shrouded in shadow light cast in all directions by the woods that have reclaimed the surrounding land.



Fays' Corners Cemetery, photograph by Kali Yuga. Used with permission.

"Black Agnes"

But perhaps one of the most infamous grave sites in Vermont is the monument of John E. Hubbard in Montpelier's Green Mount Cemetery. But it's the curse that is attached to his monument that has earned it's reputation with paranormal aficionados who chase such tales, and gave me a reason to visit it's whereabouts graveyard. As a matter of fact, my own interest in the idea and mystic of curses began when I heard the story of Montpelier's "Black Agnes" when I was a child.

Green Mount is located on the outskirts of Montpelier. The cemetery crawls 35 acres up the side of a rolling hillside that runs parallel to the Winooski River just outside the nation's smallest capital city. You'll know you'll there when you see the rather large Gothic stone freestanding arch that marks the entrance.

Green Mount began as a bequest of a local benefactor, who purchased 35 acres in 1854 so the city could bury it's dead on a nice piece of land, at a time when many existing New England cemeteries were reaching capacity and communities were looking for alternatives outside the city limits. The cemetery is on a gentle slope that rises above Route 2/State Street and overlooks the meandering Winooski River and it's fluctuating moods; it's monuments and entombments underneath the shade of old hardwood trees. I couldn't help thinking of this song when I strolled through trying to find my oddity.

The affor-referenced Hubbard was a local philanthropist and celebrity, and his ideas saw that he spent much of his life in controversy, before dying in 1899. Hubbard's aunt who died a decade before him, wanted to leave her sizable fortune of \$350,000 to the city of Montpelier – about 9 million in today's money – asking it go towards financing a new library and part of the construction of the front gates and

a chapel at Green Mount Cemetery. But Hubbard decided to contest her will and squandered her fortune all for himself. In addition to arguing that his aunt wasn't "of sound mind" when she wrote up her will, he also allegedly bribed city counselor members not to fight him in court. The whole fiasco struck Montpelier-ites as strange. Hubbard wasn't exactly short on cash, and that move easily made him a detested citizen of Vermont's capital city.

But after his death, the *Montpelier Argus and Patriot* reported the contents of his will, and were surprised to learn that Hubbard generously gave the city \$125,000 for a new library, \$25,000 for a chapel and gates at Green Mount Cemetery, and \$85,000 to establish Hubbard Park, the tree clustered hillside that rises above the state house. Hubbard seemed to be a misunderstood gentleman of some perplexities, that were only beginning to unravel after his death.

Austrian sculpture Karl Bitter was commissioned to cast this rather fraught looking bronze statue for his grave site – a shrouded figure that seems to be in a perpetual state of sorrow. Though over the years it has weathered and turned a greenish hue, it is still just as captivating in its transformation. While some say that the monument was supposed to be the Virgin Mary, the anatomy was actually intended to be male. After its installment, the memorial almost immediately became a local curiosity. In an interesting account I was able to find; Mrs. Sumner Kimball wanted to buy an even-tempered horse in 1902, and she thought a good test of its calmness would be to bring it to Green Mount Cemetery and take the horse to Hubbard's grave. As she told the seller; "if she don't shy at that, I'll take her."

But perhaps it's what we don't know about this solemn grave site that is the most baffling. The grave is more known by its official yet inexplicable nickname; "Black Agnes", but no one is quite sure who coined the nickname, or why. And perhaps more puzzling is the frightening curse attached to it.

However this grave site became the instrument to a curse is most baffling. There is no information on the origins of the curse and when its nasty thorns began growing in urban mythology. Legend has it that if you sit on the statue's lap, (some say it *has* to be at night, while others argue *at all*), you will suffer terrible misfortunes, and possibly even death.

The most popular accompanying urban legend tells the story of three local teens from an area high school who all decided to put the curse to the test, and visit Black Agnes one night. Illuminated by the light of the full moon, all three of them sat on the statue's lap as the witching hour approached. After nothing happened, they all piled back into the car, feeling bravado in their curse debunking accomplishment. But within one week, one fell down a flight of stairs, breaking his leg. One was hit by a car and the other drowned when his canoe capsized in the Winooski River. Maybe it was just a coincidence that all three incidents were apparently less than two miles away from the statue at the time. Or at least that's what the story says.

Needless to say, this narrative has made the statue a local landmark, and a hot spot for curious teenagers either looking for a thrill or asking for trouble.

After doing a little further investigating into this curse, I found that Hubbard's monument isn't unique. Karl Bitter had sculpted a few similar prototypes, and exhibited one at the 1904 World's Fair. He called his creation *Thanatos*, which was inspired by the Greek personification of death. There are also a few surviving examples of *Thanatos* still existing in other cemeteries nationwide. So I guess the metaphor here is that sitting on Hubbard's monument is the equivalent of sitting on the lap of death. Sure, that's creepy and emblematic, but not enough people are aware of that information, making the curse a lingering mystery still.

Whether you believe in curses or superstitions or not, a lot of people aren't taking chances. I've spoken

to a few people about the statue, and there have been those who outright scoffed at the curse. But when I asked if they would sit on the statue's lap, they hesitated and eventually admitted they wouldn't. Is there something to this curse business? I suppose one may never know, unless you're brazen enough to plop down on Black Agnes's lap yourself.

Youtuber Ian Burnette made a short video for the Green Mountain Film Festival's 48 Hour Film Slam in March, 2013 which partially features a cameo of Black Agnes, and my good friend and frequent accomplice to my adventures, Eric Downing. Curse or no curse, the story is compelling enough to continuously inspire people and create other monsters.

Whether you believe in the business of curses or not, it is true that the dead can kill you, and they don't need a creepy story or supernatural mojo to do it. Old civil war era cemeteries like this one have a secret that is literally just raising to the surface. These old graveyards may be leaking toxins, or, the arsenic used in old embalming fluids, into local groundwater. Two centuries ago, it was customary to have a wake for the deceased which could last several days to a week, depending on who you were, and the family didn't want the body decomposing while it was laid out in their parlor, so they were pumped full of arsenic to preserve them until the visitors stopped coming and they could be put six feet under. Arsenic was eventually banned in the early 1900s because of its toxicity, but enough corpses were pumped full of the stuff to leave a lasting effect, the real dangers being that today, many of us – especially who dwell near cemeteries, know little about arsenic or its dangers.



I visited in 2011, heading back up to college after spring break. I declined sitting on his lap.



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The Bowman Mausoleum

If you wish to visit with Cuttingsville's most famous denizen, you can find the stoic man of mystery in the village's only cemetery that is directly across Route 103 from an attractively restored Queen-Anne style Victorian mansion that he once refereed to humbly as his summer home.

I'm talking about John P. Bowman. The real Mr. Bowman is long deceased, but a poignant, life sized monster of masonry is an exact effigy of the intriguing gentleman, and can be found lurching along a hillside cemetery that rises slightly above Route 103.

I first became antiquated with Mr. Bowman as a child. I saw him whenever we would venture down to my deer camp in East Wallingford for a weekend. His mansion was a rather faded, spooky old place which was then an establishment called "The Haunted Mansion Bookshop". I had no idea that the name wasn't just a gimmick, the mansion was, and maybe still is presently, purported to be haunted.

But it was what was across from the old mansion that really drew my attention as a young boy; the somber granite mausoleum with a grief stricken, life sized statue of Mr. Bowman frozen in mid kneel along the steps that leads to its gated front entrance, depicted wearing a 19th century mourning cloak as well as clutching a key and a wreath in his hands – his blues reflected in the grays of his marble eyes that purposely gaze at the family tomb. Even as a kid, I knew there was something, well, a bit different about the Bowman mausoleum. And as I grew older, I realized that quite a few other people

seemed to share my sentiment towards Bowman and his estate.

John Porter Bowman was born in neighboring Clarendon in 1816 in an area of town referred to as Pierces Corner, which today is practically little more than the intersection of state routes 103 and 7B. Educational opportunities were limited for Bowman, but his ambitions landed him employment at a Rutland tannery at the age of 15, where he spent five years learning the art of turning animal hides into fine leather, before leaving to start his own tanning business near Cuttingsville. In the early 1850s, he became so well liked in the local community that he was either coaxed or self inspired to run for a seat on the Vermont legislature. He won.

But he much preferred business over politics, and in 1852, moved to Stony Creek, New York in search of opportunity. And he found it, in the form of a 6,000 acre plot of Hemlock forest, where he started a far more ambitious tannery business. The civil war brought great fortune to Bowman, as there was a huge demand for boots, saddles and other leather made wartime paraphernalia. He hired dozens of people, became a venerable figure of the region, and eventually fell in love and married Jennie Gates from Warren, New York. They ambitioned to building a grand summer home in his home state of Vermont where they could raise a family.

While he prospered financially, his personal life didn't fair as generously. The couple's first child, their daughter Addie, died as an infant in 1854. Their second daughter Ella survived much longer, but perished in 1879 at the age of 22, when she eventually succumbed to an illness she was fighting. Not long afterwards, in 1800, Mrs. Bowman followed their daughters to the grave.

The agonized Mr. Bowman sought to find some relief. Shortly afterwards, he hired labor crews and sent them to Cuttingsville, Vermont to begin construction on that aforementioned lavish Victorian summer home that his family would now never get to see.

During this time, he became obsessed with death; perhaps as a way to cope with his loss, or maybe influenced by the rise of spiritualism. He drew up additional blueprints to his Cuttingsville compound. Now, they would include a grand Neo-Egyptian mausoleum which would become a monument to his departed, and a local tourist attraction.

The colossal project took over a year to complete, and was the creation of 125 sculptures, stone cutters and laborers, the final cost exceeding \$75,000. Construction of it's facade ordered 750 tons of Vermont granite, 50 tons of Vermont marble, over 20,000 bricks and over 100 loads of sand. And they did a great job; the robust structure still stands proudly along the roadside, almost looking as if it was brand new construction given the great shape it's in. But it may be the ghostly statue of Mr. Bowman that is the crypt's most startling piece of artistry. His cloaked figure, clutching that wreath and key, kneels down on the front steps, peering at the front gates.

In 1887, he sold everything in New York and moved to his new digs in Cuttingsville, broken and alone. According to a few accounts, he would make it a point to look out the window each morning and gaze at the family crypt, a ritual he would keep until 1891, when he finally died, alone and sad, forever becoming a figure of misery.

He had no heirs, and no one to leave the house too. He was wealthy enough where he was able to start a trust to take care of his property long after his death. And this is where things get weirdly fascinating.

Though no actual documentation offers proof of this, the story goes that Mr. Bowman left some peculiar details in his will, where he willed his servants to prepare a freshly cooked dinner every night, turn on the gas lamps and turn down the bed clothes, as if they were expecting Mr. Bowman to return from the

dead and walk through his front door. The strangeness continues to morph. Somehow, the mansion began to inspire myths of phantom crying babies, wispy and frail phantoms moving silently down the halls, and even a secret spot where a vast amount of money was hidden by Mr. Bowman himself, still unfound and within the walls, or under a floorboard, or something...

The hidden treasure is more easily debunked. Though Mr. Bowman instructed that none of his property or belongings should ever be sold, by 1950, the diseased millionaire's extensive fortune finally was depleted, and the trust went bankrupt when the cost of up-keeping the large property became too much – so all of his paintings and furnishings were auctioned off. If there was any amount of cash left behind, it was probably spent well before that time. The claim of a crying baby is curious to me, as no children ever lived inside the house.

Some even claimed that Bowman's large statue inexplicably came to life, and could be seen slowly walking around the cemetery at night or gazing at his mansion across Route 103. Other stories I heard in passing was that local kids claimed that if you visited the statue at night, his eyes would move and follow you, or even blink. A July 27th, 1950 article printed in the *Rutland Herald* offers some amusing incite. the wife of a long time care taker admitted to the interviewer that people kept pressuring them for spook stories about the place, until her husband who had had enough, said "if they wanted a story, I'd give them one". While that isn't necessarily condemning evidence of all of this being nothing more than yarns well spun, it certainly makes me wonder.

If these claims *are* true, I wasn't fortunate enough to witness any of the bizarre phenomenon while I visited on a beautiful Spring afternoon. But the Bowman statue and tomb are both incredible works of art and craftsmanship.

I can see why his statue would make someone uncomfortable though. The well captured expression of his eternal grief is pretty evocative.



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The handsome Bowman mansion, restored and called "Laurel Hall" – as seen from the front steps of his across the street mausoleum. I would have snapped a better picture, but all of my weird detours had made me late and I needed to rush back to Burlington.

Grave With A Window

New Haven's Evergreen Cemetery is more or less unremarkable, as far as cemeteries go I suppose. That is, apart from one entombment. Among the faded and weathered headstones that are eternal witnesses to the passing generations and the turning of the seasons, is the grave of Dr. Timothy Clark Smith.

Walking through the cemetery, you'll notice a mound of earth roughly 4 feet in height. On the top is an

unremarkable looking square slab of Granite, which really doesn't allude to the fact it's supposed to mark a corpse's final resting place. But upon closer investigation, you'll realize that there is something more to this seemingly innocuous block. In the dead center of the granite slab is a Plexiglas window. Stained with years of condensation and scratches from the sputtering seasons and many other curious visitors, you find yourself peering down into an eerie undertone blackness underneath the ground your standing on. What is this?

During the 17th century there were a number of premature burials, enough to make the general public a bit uncomfortable. Medicine was still in it's momentum of advancement, and as a result, an unfortunate number of patients had a sleeping sickness, or a state of illness that could make the victim appear to be dead, but later to awaken in a cold, dark grave, very much alive. Medicine has thankfully come a long way since those days, and today, we know this strange state of sleep as Narcolepsy.

The horror stories continue. There have an unfortunate number of terrifying accounts in which bodies were accidentally dissected before death, and a few cases in which embalming was started on the not-yet-dead. Not surprisingly, urban legends of people being accidentally buried alive began to surface and spread. Legends tell of coffins opened to find a corpse with a long beard or corpses with the hands raised and palms turned upward, their fingers worn down to bone as they literally tried to claw their way of their tombs, scratch marks being found on the wooden lid of their coffins.

To stretch the imagination further, Some superstitious old New Englanders didn't blame these horrifying accounts on premature burial. Instead, they blamed the most logical answer they could muster, the victim had to be a Vampire. Evidence of unfortunate souls being found in a different position after unearthing their graves, with bloody stumps for fingers scared people, and the evidence was used to inspire famous tales as Rhode Island's Mercy Brown, who innocently became the most infamous Vampire in New England history.

A well respected man, Timothy Clarke Smith, born 1821, could boast a rather long list of accomplishments in his life. Among many things, he was a schoolteacher, a merchant, a clerk for the Treasury Dept. and obtained his degree as an MD in 1855, which led to his position as a staff surgeon in the Russian Army. But the good doctor also ruminated over those postmortem horror stories and developed a fear – not of dying, but of *not* being dead. He was terrified at the possibility of being buried alive.

That sentiment wasn't unique. It was happening so often, that some swindlers decided to cash in on it, and create a market for "safety coffins"

These new models of coffin included glass lids for observation, so people could see in, or out. Ropes from the inside of the coffin were attached to bells fastened on the surface, so that if the poor soul were to wake up six feet under, they could ring it in a panic and hope someone is nearby enough to hear it – which is said to be where the popular sayings "saved by the bell" and "dead ringer" originated from. Breathing pipes were also constructed to run air into the coffin, to sustain the misdiagnosed corpses until they could be rescued.

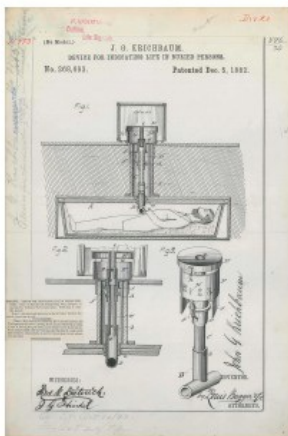
Dr. Smith was going to make sure this wouldn't happen to him, and gladly payed up for such an arrangement, which he was buried in at the time of his death in 1893 and has no doubt overshadowed any of his other noble life pursuits. Beneath a grassy mound of earth in New Haven, a tomb was constructed with a six foot cement tube that protruded the surface into a 14×14 inch piece of Plexiglas. This was to allow groundskeepers or visiting family members to check in on him, just in case they saw his disgruntled face staring up at them through the window...

For extra protection, a bell was supposedly placed in his hands that he could ring in case he woke up. But who could hear a bell under 6 feet of earth? And if he were alive, how long would the oxygen really last?

According to old records from the cemetery sexton, the burial vault has two rooms. One for Dr. Smith (with the window) and the other for his wife. The burial vault is arched with stairs (capped by the stone in the lower front of the mound) and leads to the two rooms, with the viewing window at the top of the shaft.

People from years ago claim to have peered down the window and stared directly at the skeletal face of Dr. Smith, along with a hammer and chisel placed on his chest. But today, you can barely see anything through the condensation that has occupied most of the glass surface, which may make the trip slightly disappointing for some visitors.

If you wish to see this literal monument to a man's insecurities turned extraordinary tourist attraction for yourself, take Route 7 to the small farming community of New Haven, and make a turn on Town Hill Road. The cemetery will be about a mile or two down the road on your right, just look for the rather large mound of Earth right by the entrance and the square slab dead on top. You can't miss it.



Here is a neat visual of what your money might have gotten you – should you have decided to purchase one of these special graves. It seems that this model comes with what looks like a periscope, but in actuality, the person buried could spin the handles and it would turn above, letting who ever came and checked on the cemetery that the person moved.



DSC_0844



DSC_0847



DSC_0841

“A dreamless sleep, emblem of eternal rest”

I once heard a theory that it's better to have an interesting headstone than to have been an interesting person, because the headstone will be around for much longer.

While I think that theory is open for interpretation,

in the case of Lyndon Center's G.P. Spencer, he certainly left his mark, where even after his passing, he remains a well remembered figure with his grave pointing an accusatory finger at Lyndon denizens, long after the others that weren't so kind to him have turned to dust and vanished into fading records.

The story as I know it goes that Spencer, born 1825, was a proudly stubborn atheist in Lyndonville, a

suspiciously treated minority absorbed into a larger population of hardscrabble northeast kingdomers that identified as being religious in one way or another. Unlike today's more tolerant attitudes and Vermont's time tested reputation for being far less religious than the rest of the country, the folks of town shunned Spencer.

A stone cutter, he decided to fashion himself a grave that would spitefully give himself the last word in the form of a wrap around epitaph which has weathered to points of illegibility. So I had to look it up.

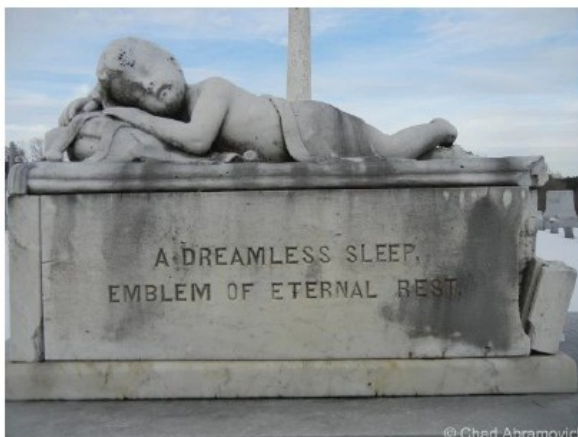
His epitaph reads; *"science has never killed or persecuted a single person for doubting or denying its teaching, and most of these teachings have been true; but religion has been murdered millions for doubting or denying her dogmas and most of these dogmas have been false."*

All stories about gods and Devils, of heavens and hells, as they do not conform to nature, and are not apparent to sense, should be rejected without consideration. Beyond the universe there is nothing and within the universe the supernatural does not and cannot exist.

Of all deceivers who have plagued mankind, none are so deeply ruinous to human happiness as those impostors who pretend to be lead by a light above.

*The lips of the dead are closed forever. There comes no voice from the tomb.
Christianity is responsible for having cast the fable of eternal fire over almost every tomb"*

G.P. Spencer died in 1908, and Lyndon locals immediately began fighting his headstone's placement in the cemetery which today can be found at the end of a dirt driveway that the village boldly named "Heaven Lane". They lost, and you can still observe it today. A monument to a man who stood up for his beliefs, and maybe a good example of an archetypal Vermonter; stubborn, not spiritually inclined, and having a sense of humor – depending on who you ask I guess.



The interesting grave topped with a curious sleeping baby, which may be a metaphor, is located in the only cemetery in tiny Lyndon Center. It was just a short yet freezing walk down College Hill from my dorm at Lyndon State College to snap a few photos of it, than retreat back to my room in search of coffee.



DSCN1996

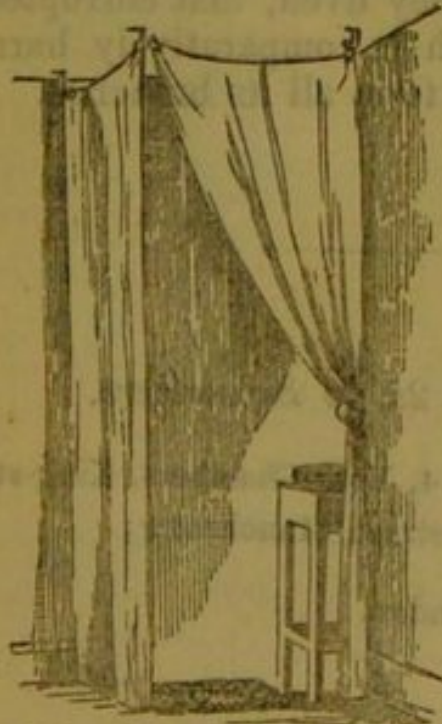
Vermont's Immortal Man and Frozen Hill Folk?

There is an old Vermont anecdote that pertains to cemeteries. When passing a graveyard, the joke is to ask "how many dead are in this cemetery?", with the correct answer of course being, "all of them". But this "dad joke" of a punchline recently took on a new weight with me.

Not long ago, someone told me offhandedly that they found a peculiar grave in a cemetery near Montpelier – which according to this gravestone and a viral post in the Vermont subreddit page, there is a 157 year old man (and counting) living somewhere in Vermont. What?

But you will say, you cannot have the provision for it which they have. Admitted : but you can at least do as many of the middle classes are still obliged to do—make a corner of your bedroom serve for a bath-room. This is the way (B).

(B.) *Contrivance for a Bath, in corner of a Cottage Room.*



a piece of calico from a couple of hooks in the ceiling ; or else cover a clothes-maiden, or something of the kind, with a sheet, or whatever will help to screen you from observation : Behind this, have a large basin of clean water, soap, and a rough towel ; and, as soon as you rise in the morning, wash yourselves thoroughly from head to foot (not sparing the soap and water), and then rub yourselves dry with the towel, till you begin to be all in a glow. Five minutes will be quite enough for this, and you will find it time exceedingly well spent. You can have no idea, unless you have tried, of the fresh, healthy feeling which this practice gives ; of the

cheerful spirit with which it will send you forth to your work ; of the bracing effect which it has on the body, and the way in which it lessens the liability to catch cold.

AWFUL CATASTROPHE AT PIMLICO ON FRIDAY NIGHT.

A catastrophe of the most awful description, which created much excitement throughout the neighbourhood, occurred on Friday night in that portion of Pimlico known as Willow-walk. The circumstances, as collected by our reporter of the district, who was upon the spot shortly after the lamentable occurrence, are these:—Between six and seven o'clock in the evening, Bishop, a police constable, having been informed that much anxiety had been expressed by some parties with respect to three men who had gone at an early hour that morning into the sewer in Warwick-street, and had not since been seen or heard of, immediately hastened to the station of the B division, when Mr. Beckerson, the inspector on duty, promptly directed some constables to go and see if they could be of any assistance, as it was understood that some men were about to open what is termed "a man hole" into the sewer, in quest of the missing men, and shortly afterwards, from the distressing circumstances that succeeded, he followed, with a number of other constables. The man hole, which consists of a grating which can be removed, was opened in Warwick street, Pimlico, and one of the labourers connected with the sewers having descended, returned almost immediately with the intelligence that the three men were lying in the sewer, apparently dead. Others, as we are informed, confirmed this statement, but were afraid of venturing to reach them. Owing to this circumstance, it was determined to break into the end of the sewer in Kenilworth-street, Warwick-street, which had been bricked up at the end of the line of houses already constructed, until the others should be added. This was immediately done, and several, out of the vast number of persons assembled pressed forward, anxious, if possible to rescue the poor labourers, some of those present entertaining a hope that with timely succour they might yet be saved. Who first entered, from the confusion and consternation prevailing at the time this account was gleaned, it is difficult to say, but there is every reason to suppose that Richard Sherman, a labourer, first made the attempt at the opening of the sewer, which is about five feet in height; he, however, returned after progressing only a few yards, the effects of the carbonic acid gas preventing his proceeding further. Mr. Henry Wells, of Warwick-street, surgeon, who was amongst those assembled, then entered

the sewer, accompanied, as it is supposed, by Sherman, and the greatest anxiety was manifested by all present for their safety. After a painful absence of two or three minutes, the populace became much alarmed, and Walsh, police constable 169 B, who had been present from the earliest period, gallantly entered the sewer, and with Mr. Wells, it is deeply to be lamented, paid with the forfeiture of his life for his humanity and intrepidity. Walsh re-appeared at the opening at the end of the sewer in two or three minutes, with the body of Mr. Wells, which was immediately conveyed to St. George's Hospital, when every trace of life was extinct. Indeed, no doubt exists that he had breathed his last before he was brought into the open air. Sherman was also rescued, as it is supposed, by Walsh, in an insensible state, but owing to prompt medical assistance was recovered. Walsh then again entered the sewer, but whether with a view of getting at the three labourers originally spoken of, or to rescue any who might have gone to their assistance, it is difficult to say, but, we regret to say, he fell a victim to his manly feeling and in five minutes afterwards was in his turn dragged out a corpse. Every attention was, as in the other cases paid to him at the Clarendon Hotel, at the corner of Kenilworth-street, but without the slightest prospect of success. Mr. Russell, superintendent of the B division with Inspector Beckerson, and a large party of their men deserve great credit for their timely and prompt attention, and up to a late hour on Friday night they were engaged in keeping the space clear for the operation of the labourers, who were breaking an opening into the sewer to bring out the bodies of the three labourers, with others who may have entered in the confusion, with a view of aiding them.

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Ha! what means this sudden thrill? A shock, as of some unimagined vital force, shoots without warning through my entire frame, leaping to my fingers' ends, piercing my brain, startling me till I almost spring from my chair.

I could not doubt it. I was in the power of the hasheesh influence. My first emotion was one of uncontrollable terror—a sense of getting something which I had not bargained for. That moment I would have given all I had or hoped to have to be as I was three hours before.

Charles Jamrach

Posted by *The Ripper* on July 7, 2014

Posted in: Characters. Tagged: Charles Jamrach, Docks, Jamrach's Menagerie, London Docks, Ratcliffe Highway, Tobacco Dock Statue, Trade.

<http://the-east-end.co.uk/charles-jamrach/>

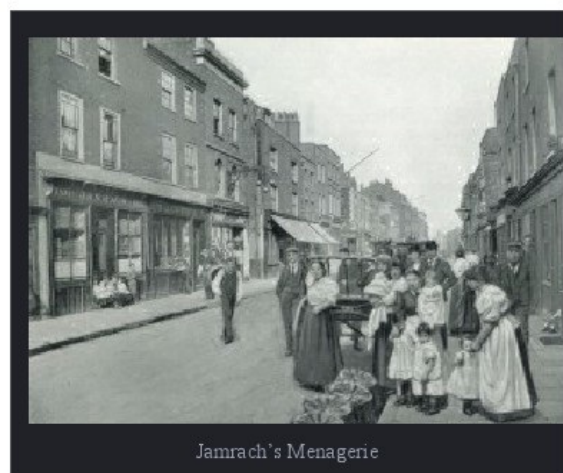


People in the East End in 1857 were an impassive and stoical lot. The area along St George's Street, formerly Ratcliffe Highway, was already infamous for the series of ghastly murders that had taken place there 45 years before ([more here](#)), but despite its notoriety, the two women peering at the jewellery in the pawnbrokers shop next door to Mr Charles Jamrach's Menagerie had other things on their minds. Suddenly, one of the women noticed a strange reflection in the shop window, and turned. She stifled a scream and pulled her companion into the shop doorway, as a fully grown Bengal Tiger padded past them, carrying a small boy in its mouth...

Charles Jamrach was born in Hamburg, Germany in March 1815 where his father, Johann Gottlieb Jamrach, was chief of the Hamburg river police. As part of his job, Jamrach Senior would find himself having to board vessels on the busy waterway and he soon built up a reputation amongst the sailors for purchasing any exotic creatures they had brought back with them from their travels. He rapidly established himself as a dealer in birds and wild animals – and set up branches in the great ports of Antwerp and London.

Young Charles was fascinated by the myriad animals, birds and insects in his father's shop and following his father's death in 1840, Charles Jamrach moved to take over the London branch of the business, developing the existing premises into a bird shop and museum in St. George Street known as 'Jamrach's Animal Emporium', a menagerie in Bett Street, and a warehouse in Old Gravel Lane, Southwark.

The business thrived, partly due to Jamrach's location, close to The London Docks and partly due to his ever expanding customer base – the London Zoological Gardens had been loaned an Elephant which he was confident they would buy, and following a devastating



Jamrach's Menagerie

fire at P.T Barnum's Circus in 1864, it was Jamrach's Menagerie who was responsible in restocking it with animals.

A Mr John Edward Gray who was keeper of zoology at the British Museum also named a snail that had been forwarded to him by Charles Jamrach *Amoria jamrachi* in his honour.

A reporter visiting his premises wrote that "The museum includes tropical beetles glorious with shards of green and gold, and tropical butterflies like tropical blossoms, or costliest satin and velvet embroidered with creamy lace, and be-dropt with precious metals and precious stones"...

As one can imagine, Jamrach's stock varied considerably, dependant as it was on the ships that were docking in London, but a contemporary article of the time shows the extent and prices of the animals on offer.

Zebras – £100 – £150 each

Camels – £20

Giraffes – £40

Ostriches – £80

Polar Bears – £25

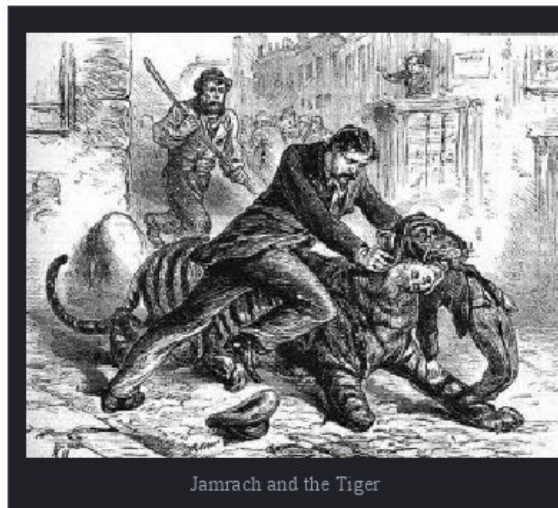
Other Bears – £8 – £16

Leopards – £20

Lions – £100

Tigers – £300

On one fateful day in 1857, Charles Jamrach had just taken delivery of a large number of animals which had been brought in on ships arriving in London Docks from their voyage to the East Indies. The animals were taken to the Bett Street repository with Jamrach himself overseeing operations. To ensure that the fully grown Bengal tiger in one crate had no opportunity to maul his workmen, Jamrach instructed that the wooden crate containing the beast was placed with its barred opening facing the wall. However, the strength of the animal had been underestimated – and as another crate containing leopards was being unloaded, Jamrach and the workmen were horrified to hear a crash and to discover that the tiger had pushed out the back of the crate with its hind legs and was now prowling around the yard.



Jamrach and the Tiger

The tiger stalked its way into the street where a curious boy, around nine years of age, reached out to stroke the back of the strange creature that had appeared before him. In an instant, the tiger whirled and gripping the boy's shoulder in his jaws, ran off down the street in the direction of the docks.

Jamrach dashed after the animal and upon catching up with it, grabbed the tiger by the loose skin of its neck and tried to wrestle it to the ground. He succeeded in tripping it by putting his own leg under the tiger's hind quarters, but the animal would not relinquish its hold on the now terrified boy. It was not until his workmen arrived and dealt the animal several

blows to the head, that the stunned animal finally let go of the child. Shaking itself free, the tiger then turned tail and headed back to the menagerie yard and the relative safety of an empty crate, where it was recaptured.

The event is commemorated by a statue that stands near the entrance to Tobacco Dock today.

The boy was taken to hospital but, astonishingly, found to be virtually unharmed save for a severe fright and a few scratches. Jamrach offered the boy's father compensation of £50, but the father rejected the money and decided to bring a court action against him for damages.

At the trial the judge sympathised with Jamrach, saying that, instead of being made to pay, he ought to have been rewarded for saving the life of the boy, and perhaps that of a lot of other people.

The judge, however, had to administer the law as he found it, and reminded Jamrach that he was responsible for any dangerous consequences brought about as a result of his business. He suggested, however, as there was not much hurt done to the boy, to put down the damages as low as possible. The court subsequently set a penalty of £300, of which £240 went to the lawyers as costs!

News of the tiger's escape and notoriety soon got around, and within a few days of the end of the hearing, Jamrach was able to sell the animal to a Mr Edmonds, of Wombwell's Menagerie for £300.

Charles Jamrach died in Bow on 6 September 1891, leaving two sons, Albert and William. The business continued for some time, but began running into difficulties during the First World War, and after his son Albert died in 1917, the firm finally closed its doors in 1919.

The final words are from an article written by a journalist in 1879 who had been invited to visit Jamrach's Menagerie and who wrote "I have nothing further to state, except to assure my readers of naturalist tastes that, for whatever they want, from a hippopotamus to a humming-bird, Jamrach's is the very place to go to".



The kidnapping of Charlie Chaplin's coffin

Tuesday 17th May 2016

historyextra.com

• BBC History Magazine



In March 1978, two men hoped to get rich by stealing the body of the movie legend Charlie Chaplin...

This article was first published in the May 2016 issue of History Revealed



Charlie Chaplin in his younger days, as his lovable downtrodden character, the Tramp. 1915. (General Film Company/Getty Images)

Charlie Chaplin knew (understatement alert) how to entertain, and exactly what it took to make people laugh. The British actor/director's career amusing audiences spanned eight decades – beginning before he was ten years old when he joined a clog-dancing act in 1897.

From the vaudeville stage, via a popular spell in pantomime, Chaplin eased into silent film in his 20s. It was during only his second appearance in front of the camera that he introduced his now-immortal cinematic character

the Tramp, a creation that left moving-picture patrons gasping for breath during dozens of his two-reeler movies.

In the golden age of silent cinema, Chaplin had the Midas touch. Even in the burgeoning world of the 'talkies', the silent superstar found his voice with his spot-on parody of Adolf Hitler in 1940's *The Great Dictator*, for which his signature moustache came in handy.

It seems fitting that this man could have one last piece of entertainment – strange and slightly morbid though it was – to offer the world, more than two months after his death.

Missing coffin

Having suffered from strokes during the 1960s and '70s, a frail and wheelchair-bound Chaplin spent his final years living with his fourth wife, Oona, by Lake Geneva in Switzerland.

Then, on Christmas Day 1977, he died in his sleep at his home in Corsier-sur-Vevey, aged 88. Chaplin was laid to rest a few days later in the local cemetery, but that rest lasted only a couple of months.

On 2 March 1978, police phoned the Chaplin mansion to inform 51-year-old Oona that there had been a burglary in the middle of the night and that her husband's coffin was missing.



Chaplin aged 70 in 1959, with his wife Oona and seven of their children. They had another before he died in 1977. (Pictorial Parade/Archive Photos/Getty Images)

afterwards, there was another phone call, this time from a man claiming responsibility for the body-snatching.

Through a thick Eastern European accent, he said he had a photo of the coffin to prove he had it, before demanding 1 million Swiss francs (£1.5 million today) for its return.

Ridiculous and botched

As Chaplin was no stranger to controversy earlier in his life, having been suspected of being a communist at the time of the House Un-American Activities Committee witch-hunts, rumours circulated about the theft. Had anti-Semites desecrated his grave, angry that a supposedly Jewish person could be buried in a Christian cemetery? Or had neo-Nazis stolen the body in retaliation for his political satire, *The Great Dictator*? Or was it just a snatch-and-grab to make quick cash?

Whatever the motive, Oona (with the support of her lawyers) refused to pay the ransom. Despite threats against the youngest of Chaplin's children, she never considered the strange ordeal as too serious, acknowledging that "Charlie would have thought it rather ridiculous".

The weeks went by, however, and the still-unknown thieves persisted, going so far as to demand that the Chaplins' butler bring the cash to a drop-off point in the family's Rolls Royce. Spotting an opportunity, the police arranged for an officer to pose as the butler and make a fake drop. But the sting operation was botched when the local postman, who didn't recognise the driver of the Rolls, followed the car, prompting the police to mistakenly arrest him.

Rest in peace

The rather red-faced police redeemed themselves in May. Expecting another call from the thieves, they not only tapped the Chaplins' phone, but assigned officers to keep tabs on some 200 telephone boxes in the area. It worked a treat and, 11 weeks after the grave-robbing, the police finally had a man in custody, 24-year-old Pole Roman Wardas.

Charlie's coffin was found buried in a cornfield close to the Chaplin home, 22 May 1978. (Central Press/Getty Images)



His accomplice, a Bulgarian named Gantscho Ganev, was picked up later. Wardas – suffering from financial difficulties and hoping to make some money with the hare-brained scheme – directed the police to a cornfield a mile from the Chaplin mansion and told them where to dig.

The 300-pound oak coffin was intact.

As Wardas was judged to be the mastermind of the crime, his sentence was four years, while Ganev, 38, received an 18-month suspended sentence as he was only the 'muscle man'. Both seemed sincerely contrite and even wrote to Oona to apologise, which she accepted. Chaplin's son Eugene later revealed that his mother had admitted, "In a way, it's a shame that we found him!"

Meanwhile, Chaplin's body was re-buried – although this time, the coffin was encased in concrete to make sure he could properly rest in peace this time.

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The Witch Children: Tortured by evil exorcists

17:45 EST, 30 April 2016 |

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Daily Mail

MailOnline US - news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories

The Witch Children: Tortured by evil exorcists, but 'multicultural' Britain is too liberal to admit they exist

- Problem of child exorcism is getting worse, according to Dr Hoskins
- Victoria Climbié, 8, killed by Marie-

Thérèse Kaou and partner Carl Manning

- Kristy Bamu, 15, was found dead in an East London high-rise in 2010
- There were 679 alerts in past 18 months of children at risk of trafficking

By Dr Richard Hoskins For The Mail On Sunday

Mardoche was 11 when I first met him, shivering in the corner of a youth psychiatric ward in Chelsea.

Before I could speak, he looked up. 'I am not a witch,' he said. 'I don't even know what this kindoki [witchcraft] is.'

This wasn't my first encounter with a sinister phenomenon taking hold across Europe and Britain.

'Witch branding'—telling a child they're possessed by witchcraft and face life-threatening exorcism—is already an epidemic in Africa.

Today there are hundreds of cases of witch branding in Britain, perhaps thousands.

Most involve people from Africa, where traditional beliefs in black magic are widespread.



© VIDEO GRAB



© VIDEO GRAB

There is a severe problem with child exorcism, writes Dr Richard Hoskins. Victoria Climbié (left) and the boy thought to be 'Adam' (right), whose torso was found in the Thames

Others involve Muslims who believe in 'jinns' or spirits, an element of Islamic theology.

The children are 'cured' with the utmost brutality: starvation, violence, sometimes torture, and in a number of appalling cases, death. As I know only too well.

I am a regular expert witness in the courts.

I am the only multicultural expert on the national police database and I know the trafficking of foreign children into Britain is getting worse.

Yet, content in our own well-meaning attitudes, we are doing nothing in response.

In fact we are complicit.

We are helping its spread through our porous borders, the weaknesses of our welfare state, and the hapless political correctness of our police and social services.

They live in thrall to the mantra that children are always best off cared for in their own racial community – even if that community is doing them harm.

Mardoche came to London from the Democratic Republic of the Congo as a toddler.

When he was about eight, his relatives accused him of being a witch.

Traumatised, he started struggling at school. Islington Social Services heard his family wished to return him to the Congo for an exorcism – or deliverance – ceremony.

This would cleanse him, they said, of the witchcraft, known in the local lingala language as kindoki.

Mardoche's representative, Sarah Beskine, persuaded the judge I should be instructed.

I asked Islington Council if they would co-fund my trip to Africa to investigate.

To my astonishment, they funded half my costs to the tune of £2,200, although a council source informed me there was disquiet about a white person being instructed on a 'black case'.

I went to the Congo in 2005 and spent a fortnight with Mardoche's extended family. I interviewed them and spoke with the pastors who would conduct the exorcism.



Dr Richard Hoskins (right) has been assisting Mardoche Yembi (left) after his experiences involving exorcism. Kristy Bamu, 15, was found dead in an East London high-rise in 2010

In Kinshasa, I witnessed the exorcism of another young boy of Mardoche's age.

His mouth was parched and he was close to fainting.

Prior to exorcism, a child is not allowed to eat or drink for several days.

I've since seen children on the point of death after being fasted.

Over the next two hours, the boy was forced to stand upright while a dozen adults shouted and screamed.

Eventually, exhausted, he was bent double, vomiting on to the dusty floor where he passed out. 'See,' a rotund pastor beamed at me. 'The witchcraft just left him.'

Back in the UK, I told the court that sending Mardoche to the Congo for exorcism would place his life in grave danger.

The judge ordered he should be taken into foster care.

When I tried to question Islington Council, it clammed up. Why did they consider letting a child in their care be sent back to Africa for exorcism?

Who thought political correctness came above child protection? Every question was met by resistance.

They hid behind the Family Court and threatened me with contempt proceedings. They didn't want Mardoche's story to be known.

It is a story that recurs with alarming regularity.

Victoria Climbié was eight when she was tortured and killed by her 'aunt' Marie-Thérèse Kaou and partner Carl Manning in February 2000. They thought she was a witch.

The infamous cases of the eight-year-old Angolan orphan known as Child B and 'the torso in the Thames' – named 'Adam' by police and identified as a victim of ritual abuse and murder in my book, *The Boy In The River* – were also linked to accusations of witchcraft.

However, hundreds of cases go unreported thanks to the secrecy of family courts and local authorities.

Newham Council tried to prevent you ever knowing about the murder of 15-year-old Kristy Bamu, who was found dead in the bath of a bleak East London high-rise on Christmas Day 2010.

If I hadn't fought their gagging order at the Royal Courts of Justice, they'd have succeeded.

Kristy had been tortured for five days and suffered 101 injuries because his eldest sister, Magalie Bamu, and her boyfriend, Eric Bikubi, thought he was a witch.

These cases are the tip of the iceberg.

Screengrabs from a video of children in the Congo receiving exorcisms (pictured). There were 679 alerts in the past 18 months of children at risk of trafficking

The trouble is, no one is quite sure how deep the iceberg goes because authorities are petrified of conducting the research.



Metropolitan Police figures reveal there were 60 crimes linked to faith in London up to September last year, more than double 2013's total of 23.

Half of UK police forces do not record such cases.

In Britain, the only non-Governmental agency to deal with these issues, Children and Families Across Borders, says it had 679 alerts in the past 18 months in which a child was in

jeopardy from being trafficked across borders.

In a recent case I worked on, 'Ephraim', 14, arrived at school with blood trickling down his neck.

A nurse found over 40 injuries.

His mother was arrested. That night police placed him back with his church pastor – whose message of witchcraft and exorcism had inspired his mother to torture him.

It's testament to Ephraim's courage he stood firm against pressure to withdraw his evidence.

His mother was sentenced to nearly five years in prison.

For years it has been an unquestioned axiom of multicultural Britain that a 'community' child is always placed with someone from that same community.

Perish the thought a black child could be fostered by white parents.

Alongside this, we have an EU whose porous borders have allowed the free movement of migrants without even basic security or child protection checks.

The EU has made the task of protecting everyone in Britain 1,000 times harder.

Three weeks ago, Mardoche called me out of the blue and told me he wanted to tell the world what happened to him.

Now 24, he wants to stop other children being accused of witchcraft.

When we shook hands, he looked me in the eyes. 'Thank you,' he said. 'You gave me a future.'

Mardoche's story will be broadcast this week on Victoria Derbyshire, BBC2.

Comments (4)

Caliburnusx, London, United Kingdom, 2 weeks ago

It's their "culture"?!?! NO THIS IS ENGLAND!!!

Cookie, Gowksthapple, 2 weeks ago

It's not racist to call this child abuse.

brusselsvisitor, Brussels, Belgium, 2 weeks ago

If I can recall, there were some stories of headless corpses being found in the Thames back in 2000. Suspicions were geared towards the Nigerian community, but fear of racism and "bigotry" hushed this story down the drain...

mickidver, sheffield, United Kingdom, 2 weeks ago

Yep, welcome to Britain! Home of the bedwetting, hand wringing 'ieftie luvvies', whose mantra is "lessons will be learned"

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Uganda: Children Help Identify Grandmother's Killers

By Andrew Bagala

allafrica.com

24 April 2016

Kampala — It wasn't bad timing, the crime would have taken place without tracing any suspects. And at 8pm on the night of July 13, 2004, a killing at Kangore, Sheema County happened.

Jolly Ntegyereize, an elderly woman, had just served her two grandchildren, Richard Nimusiima and Wilbert Ahimbisibwe, supper. Both her grandchildren were below 12 years.

The trio this time had their supper in the kitchen. Being young, they rested near the fire place as their grandmother prepared a few things in the kitchen.

Ntegyereize needed some water to clear the dishes, so she picked a basin to fetch water from the main house.

As she walked there, she was intercepted by people she couldn't recognise, and within seconds, she was thrown into panic. Before she could concentrate to identify them, they had already started hacking her. Instant pain forced her to scream waking up her grandchildren.

What Nimusiima and Ahimbisibwe saw was so horrific that they both rushed back into the kitchen to hide.

The attackers heard the footsteps of someone in the kitchen drawing backwards. One attacker abandoned his colleague and went for a fast search.

The two boys watched in horror and fear as their grandmother was in agony as the first attacker continued to hack her.

Witness ordeal

"When I saw the second attacker about to reach the kitchen, I chose to take off," Ahimbisibwe recalled as he narrated to the detectives.

The second attacker couldn't allow him run away. He confronted him. But the attacker managed to injure him with a machete before he outmanoeuvred and escaped through the banana plantation.

Nimusiima later said after they had responded to their grandmother's scream, he had made a few steps and hid in a room near the kitchen.

The second attacker returned after failing to catch up with the boy. He searched around the kitchen.

"The light from the fireplace illuminated his face and I saw him clearly though he often looked over where I was without seeing me," Nimusiima later said. Nimusiima was in a vantage place since he could see what was happening.

The first attacker continued to injure his grandmother even when she was motionless. The two attackers seemed to be bothered that a child had fled the scene. They also quickly left.

After sometime, Ahimbisibwe returned with neighbours. They couldn't salvage much. Ahimbisibwe's grandmother was lifeless. After seeing respondents, Nimusiima came out of the hiding. Police officers were called although they delayed.

An investigation commenced with an interrogation of the two boys. Ahimbisibwe told detectives that he had seen their neighbours Paul Kakubi and David Muramuzi attacking their grandmother.

"Kakubi had a machete which he used to hack my grandmother in the neck. As Kakubi hit grandmother, Muramuzi came looking for us in the kitchen," Ahimbisibwe told detectives. When detectives asked Nimusiima, he also had a similar narration.

In the morning, detectives visited Kakubi and Muramuzi's home for verification. Neither the two nor their families were at home. Their homes had been deserted, raising suspicion.

Locals plan lynching

News spread about the incident. Some residents got so angry about what had happened to a member of their community that they wanted Kakubi and Muramuzi lynched.

Police intensified their hunt for the duo before the mob could land their hands on them.

Fortunately, Kakubi, Muramuzi and their father George Karyeija had already handed themselves to Kyanyenyi Sub-county authorities.

Mr Ngambeki went to the sub-county and arrested the trio. The case appeared to be crystal clear.

Dr Frank Mugabe, who had carried out an autopsy on Ntegyereize's body, said the deceased died of injuries after she was cut in the neck and her spinal cord was damaged. Dr Mugabe concluded excessive bleeding was the cause of her death.

Mr Ngambeki had two eyewitnesses and the people they claimed to have seen had been arrested. It was believed that the trio had disappeared from the village after the incident due to guilt.

Interrogation of the suspects opened fresh questions in the case.

Kakubi, Muramuzi and Karyeija told the detectives that they spent a night at the vigil of Apollo Katunda's daughter at Omukashenyi village, which they said was 15km away from Kangwe village where the murder happened.

The suspects told police that they left their home more than 10 hours before the incident happened.

Police had to subject their claims to a test. They went back to the village where the trio claimed to have been at around 8pm.

Police confirmed that the allegations by the suspects that a person closer to their family had died and a vigil was held were true.

Katunda, who held a vigil for her dead daughter, confirmed to the police that he saw the trio at his home the whole day. He said he even interacted with them.

Silvesta Rugwira, the village chairman, and his members also wrote a letter confirming to have seen the trio at the funeral. Juliet Kyomuhendo, a resident, also told detectives that she saw the trio at the funeral.

More investigations

A dozen statements from several people confirming the suspects' explanation meant that the detectives had to go back to the field to gather more information about the case.

Mr Ngambeki talked to the witnesses again. Kyomuhendo told detectives that the deceased was believed to be a witchdoctor in the community and that her neighbours feared her.

She said some of the residents felt that she had to leave the village for them to have peace.

"I found Karyeija talking to my brother Erias Birondwa asking him to monitor the deceased's movement

so that they can attack her. I rejected the move. Birondwa ridiculed me as a coward. He said the woman deserves death," Kyomuhendo said.

Asked when the two made such statements, she told detectives that it was two days before the death.

Detectives sought the statements from Birondwa who denied meeting the suspect for any sinister motive. When he was pressed during interrogation, he conceded to have had the conversation with Karyeija though he didn't take any action.

Two other people told police that they saw Kakubi and his brother in the evening of the fateful day riding a bicycle to the village where the woman was murdered. The two witnesses helped detectives place Kakubi and Muramuzi at the scene.

File to DPP

Police officers were convinced that the duo killed the deceased whom they accused of witchcraft. Their file was submitted to the Director of Public Prosecutions and it was sanctioned. The suspects were produced in court on charges of murder and remanded to prison.

In 2005, the hearing of the case before Justice Lawrence Gidudu started in Bushenyi High Court. Both Kakubi and Muramuzi maintained a denial of the charges.

Prosecutors presented the young boys in court who were able to identify the suspects and also narrated what they saw on the fateful day.

In court, there was no much fight on the ingredients of murder except one whether the two accused persons participated in the killing.

The deceased's relatives told court that at one time before the killing, the suspects had engaged them to have the witchcraft allegations against Ntegyereize be resolved in a local council meeting, but the deceased refused to attend the meeting.

Prosecution insisted that on the fateful day, the suspects rode from vigil and carried out the attack then travelled back since they knew that they would have an explanation.

They expected to encounter only one person- their target. Fortunately, Ntegyereize was with her grandchildren in the kitchen.

In their defence, Kakubi and Muramuzi maintained that they were at a vigil the night the elderly woman was killed.

In his judgement four years later, Justice Gidudu said the killing "was planned to happen with the funeral and burial of Katunda's daughter providing the necessary opportunity and cover after the murder".

"I find both accused guilty of murder contrary to sections 188 and 189 of the Penal Code Act and I convict each of them accordingly," Justice Gidudu said. The two were sentenced to death for killing Ntegyereize.

Justice Lawrence Lawrence Gidudu's ruling

"The accused are stated to be first offenders. They pray for lenience to go and look after their families.

The State prays for the maximum sentence of n death. The ground for this prayer is that the accused pre-arranged to murder the deceased. Their reasons that she was a witch would have been settled by the local leaders.

I have given considerable thought about the submissions by the state and the prayers by the convicts for

lenience. Jolly Ntengyereize was murdered without being given a chance to defend herself against the allegations of witchcraft. Her life was terminated at once forever. I have no basis for imposing a lesser sentence since all opportunity existed for discussing this matter either in a family or village meeting between these neighbours. I am appreciative of the accused's remorsefulness but I am inclined to impose a sentence that equals the crime that was committed.

Accordingly, I sentence each of the accused persons to suffer death in a manner prescribed by law."

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China débuts Dalek-style robocop

thestack.com



Alice MacGregor Tue 26 Apr 2016 4.38pm



Related Articles

China's National Defense University has unveiled Anbot, a robotic crime fighter designed to protect against violence and unrest on the country's streets.

Unveiled last week at the 12th Chongqing Hi-Tech Fair, the intelligent police bot measures 1.49m tall and weighs 78kg. It can travel autonomously at a top speed of 18km/h, on flat surfaces.

The state-backed publication the *People's Daily* reported that the patrolling robot features built-in sensors which 'mimic the human brain, eyes and ears.' The article explained that when the Anbot detects a potential security threat, its human controller can remotely activate its 'electrically-charged riot control tool,' presumably a type of laser or taser device.

'AnBot represents a series of breakthroughs in key technologies including low-cost autonomous navigation and intelligent video analysis, which will play an important role in enhancing the country's anti-terrorism and anti-riot measures,' the update added.

People can also press an alert button on the robot in the event of an emergency. In one demonstration, the robot showed its ability to grab hold of a mannequin leg.

According to the *People's Daily* report, AnBot is capable of eight hours of continuous work, but the article did not offer any further details about how long it takes to recharge, or what happens when a terrorist escapes down a flight of stairs.

Security and emergency applications are of growing interest for robotics teams around the globe, with some results more successful than others. The United Arab Emirates announced last year that it was looking to introduce a 'robocop' scheme by 2017. The robots will first roll out in public places such as shopping centres and transport hubs, and will feature an interactive screen and a microphone connected to Dubai Police call centres.



Screen Shot 2016-04-26 at 16.33.23

In 2014 another potential robotic police officer received global attention, not least because its ambit of using robotics to help disabled officers return to the beat is so close to the central theme in Paul Verhoeven's 1987 sci-fi blockbuster *Robocop*, in which a crippled law enforcement officer is put into a massively powerful cybernetic suit and returns to work with a vengeance.

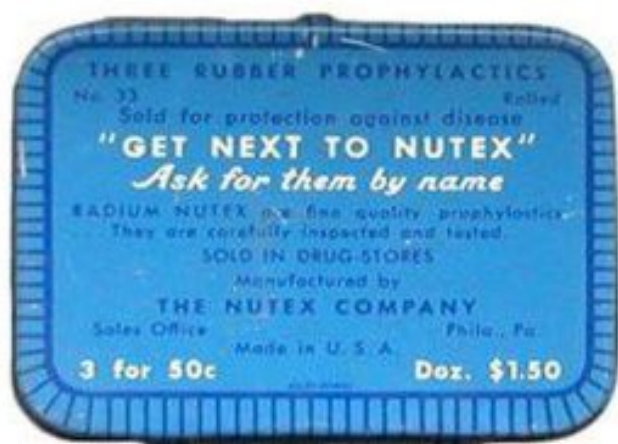
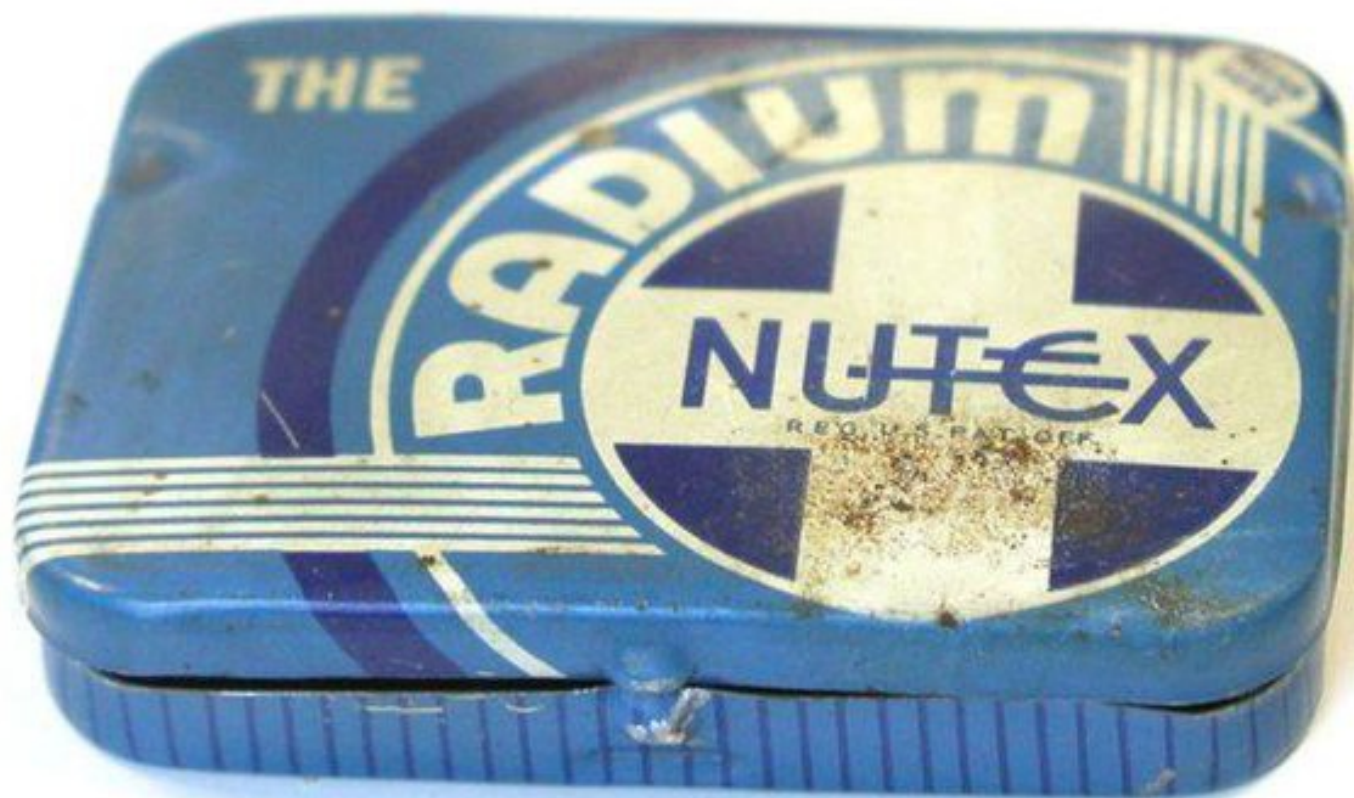
Telebot, however, is a telepresence robot designed to be operated from

rather further away. Jeremy Robins, a Lieutenant Commander in the U.S. Navy Reserves, donated \$20,000 to Florida International University's Discovery Lab to investigate the possibilities of cybernetic police presence, and the result, as the video below demonstrates, is certainly visually impressive.

Robins explained: "We want to use telebots to give disabled military and police veterans an opportunity to serve in law enforcement... With telebots, a disabled police officer will be capable of performing many, if not most, of the functions of a normal patrol officer – interacting with the community, patrolling, responding to 911 calls, issuing citations. Telerobotics has already begun to make its way into the worlds of medicine, business and private security. Extending it into law enforcement is simply the natural progression of things."

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Dear [redacted]

STAT

On May 29, 1958 I sent you a letter concerning crews disappearing from ships on the high seas, or ships which have disappeared without trace, well, I have just read a weird story concerning the Dutch vessel S.S. Ourang Medan. I will be indeed grateful for your opinion of this story. Also, do you think "something from the unknown" is involved?

In early February, 1948, an SOS came from the S.S. Ourang Medan. Dutch and British listening posts located the vessel as proceeding through Malacca Strait, the sea was calm, the weather clear.

SOS, SOS, again came the frenzied call. After a short silence, ". . . all officers, including Captain dead, lying in chartroom and on Bridge . . . probably whole crew dead . . ."

There followed a series of indecipherable dots and dashes and then came quite clearly: "I die."

Rescue ships from Dutch Sumatra and British Malaya rushed to the indicated location of the vessel in distress. They found her only fifty miles from the position given. Boats were put over the sides to investigate.

When boarding parties reached the Ourang Medan they found an eerie sight. There wasn't a living creature on the ship. The captain lay dead on the bridge. The bodies of the other officers sprawled in the wheelhouse, chartroom and wardroom. The faithful "sparks" was slumped in a chair in the radio shack, his hand still on the sending key. The bodies of the crew lay everywhere: in their rooms, in the passageways, on the decks. And on all the dead faces was a look of convulsive horror. As a report of the PROCEEDINGS OF THE MERCHANT MARINE COUNCIL put it: "their frozen faces were upturned to the sun, the mouths were gaping open and the eyes staring . . ." Everyone was dead. Even the ship's dog, a small terrier, was lifeless, its teeth bared in anger or agony.

But strangely there was no sign of wounds or injuries on any of the bodies.

After a quick conference, the boarding parties decided to put a tow line onto the vessel and take her into port. But at that very "moment" smoke and flames belched forth from No. 4 hold. The fire was immediately so hot and so widespread that it was impossible to subdue.

The boarding parties hurriedly abandoned the vessel and returned to safety of their own ships. Moments later there was a terrific "explosion" on the Ourang Medan and then the vessel sank with all her "dead" crew.

I feel sure that the S.S. Ourang Medan tragedy holds the answer to many of these airplane accidents, and unsolved mysteries of the sea. Also, I have often thought about the many sightings of huge fiery spheres rising from the "sea," or disappearing into the "sea," by ships captains and crews in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

There are alarming passages in old English chronicles, written in medieval Latin, and in Latin incunabula, or books printed before the year 1500 A.D., which suggest that these "fiery spheres" cause destruction, and that they come from "within our planet." For instance: In 216 B.C., "things like ships were seen in the sky, over Italy . . . In Sardinia, a knight was making his rounds, inspecting the posts guarding the rampart, when a stick in his hands "burst into flames." The same thing happened to Roman soldiers in Sicily who saw their javelins flame and burn in their hands." At Arpi, "a round shield was seen in the sky."

Also, in A.D. 1067 people saw a fire that flamed and burned fiercely in the sky. It came near the earth, and for a little time brilliantly lit it up. Afterwards, "it revolved, ascended on high, then descended into the sea." In several places it "burned" woods and plains.

Yes, the enchanting sea, what terrifying "secret" does it hold? I feel sure that the S.S. Ourang Medan tragedy also holds the answer to this "secret."

Sincerely yours,

C. H. Marck Jr.

C. H. Marck, Jr.

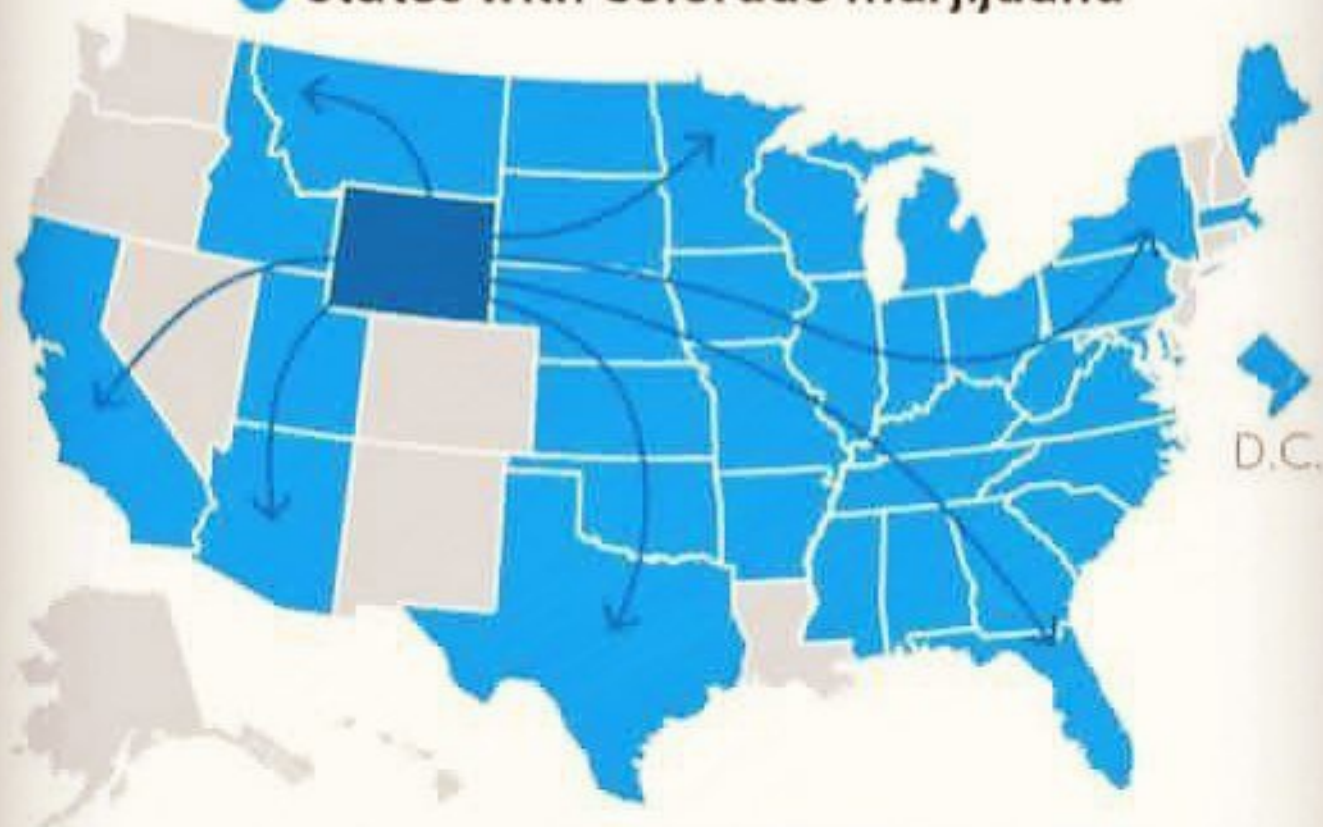
STAT

Assistant to the Director
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Washington, D. C.

COLORADO MARIJUANA SMUGGLING

Authorities say they've intercepted thousands of shipments of marijuana leaving Colorado, destined for sale on the black market in other states.

● States with Colorado marijuana



Janet Boehnke, USA TODAY





Edward G. Loring

Montana county wants to dispose of Cold War commode kits

April 28, 2016

yahoo.com



In this Tuesday, April 26, 2016 photo, Cold War era sanitation kits, meant to provide makeshift bathroom facilities for fallout shelter, are shown in Bozeman, Mont. After county officials determined they didn't need the kits any more, they found out the Department of Defense didn't want them back and the Federal Emergency Management Agency had no use for them, either. The county has offered some to museums. The rest may be sold at auction. A value and date haven't been set. (Troy Carter /Bozeman Daily Chronicle via AP) MANDATORY CREDIT

src="https://s.yimg.com/ny/api/res/1.2/7AtFVbQ2UgXB7vwX5svk7A-/YXBwaWQ9aGlnaGxhbmRlcjtzT0x0c9ODAw/http://media.zenfs.c

Forty-two fiberboard drums labeled "SK IV Sanitation Kit" were shipped to Gallatin County in January 1964, the Bozeman Daily Chronicle (<http://bit.ly/24mUN5C>) reported.

The kits contain a toilet seat, commode liner, 10 rolls of toilet paper that people were cautioned to "USE SPARINGLY," along with commode chemical. The seat fits on top of the lined drum.

The kits are a reminder of "the subtle but real fear of a nuclear World War III," said Shane Hope, an archaeologist in the county's Historic Preservation Board.

After county officials determined they didn't need the kits any more, they found out the Department of Defense didn't want them back. The Federal Emergency Management Agency had no use for them, either.

The county has offered some of the kits to museums. The rest may be sold at auction. A value and date haven't been set.

The kits include instructions for setting up and using the commodes. When the waste reaches "the level of the sanitary fill line on the drum," users are instructed to put on the included rubber gloves, use the included wire tie to close up the liner and put the lid back on the drum.

"DO NOT REMOVE THE FILLED BAGS FROM THE DRUM," the instructions caution. And if

you need to move the drum, it is preferable to slide it across the floor instead of tilting or lifting.

The drums, which were furnished by the Office of Civil Defense, also included drinking cups and a can opener to open metal cans of food or to pry lids from water-storage drums.

Information from: Bozeman Daily Chronicle, <http://www.bozemandailychronicle.com>

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Concealed Fertility Charms

perceptionsofpregnancy.com

By clennphillips on April 25, 2016

In October 2015 I was contacted by a man named Roy Carter who'd been renovating a Tudor cottage in Burwash, East Sussex. During renovations he'd found a small wooden figurine, about an inch and a half long, which he believes had been deliberately concealed within the cottage, either placed above a roof beam or within one of the walls. This certainly isn't the first obscure object to have been found secreted away within a domestic space. All manner of items have been discovered – from shoes and bottles to animal remains – in unusual locations: within walls; under floorboards, hearthstones, and thresholds; above doors and ceilings; up chimney breasts; in thatching; and buried in gardens. The majority of these items date to the 18th and 19th centuries, and appear to have been deliberately concealed rather than accidentally lost. But why?

Scholars have been unable to find much written evidence explaining this custom of concealment, so we have only theories. The most popular notion is that these items were hidden away in the post-medieval home to protect its occupants from malevolent forces, both natural (fire, disease) and supernatural (witches, demons, ghosts). There is, however, another theory – and for this we need to take a closer look at the Burwash figurine.

Although crudely executed, the figurine does appear to have breasts, and when flat on its back, it looks decidedly pregnant. Was it intended to depict a pregnant woman? It also has two small holes in its back which, coupled with its small size, suggests that it may have originally hung on a thread. Was it worn as a charm? And, if so, was it associated with fertility magic, worn and maybe later concealed by a woman hoping to conceive or to bear healthy children?



The Burwash figurine.

Photograph by Owen Davies



The Burwash figurine. Photograph by Owen Davies.

Other

figurines, known as poppets and made from a variety of materials (wood, clay, cloth, straw, wax, etc.), have been found hidden away in buildings. Not all of them would have been concealed for fertility magic. Some, which have been burnt or pricked with pins, were probably used in maleficium (harmful magic), whilst others were possibly concealed for luck, protection, or as a form of foundation sacrifice. But some do clearly have

a connection with fertility; there is, for example, a rather uncanny fetus-like terracotta figure held at the Boscastle Museum of Witchcraft & Magic, found bricked-up in a wall in a house in Okehampton, Devon. Was this concealed to ensure fertility or the safe delivery of a baby?



*The Okehampton poppet.
Photograph courtesy of the
Museum of Witchcraft & Magic,
Boscastle.*

Other objects may have been concealed for similar purposes: shoes, for example. Roughly 2000 finds are on record in the Northampton Museum Concealed Shoe Index, having been found worldwide, although primarily in England. As with other hidden objects, they're often found up chimneys, in roof spaces, and in walls, and mainly date to the 18th and 19th centuries. All kinds of shoes are represented: working-class hobnailed boots, higher-class court shoes, women's lace-up boots, and children's shoes, which account for 29% of those on record.[1] The presence of children's shoes has led some researchers to suggest that they may have been concealed in connection with fertility magic.

Shoes are, after all, often associated with concepts of fertility. If, for example, a woman places a shoe on a table it foretells the birth of a child.[2] In Lancashire, if you try on the shoes of a woman who has recently given birth then you too will soon conceive.[3] Additionally, the practice of throwing shoes – and later, shoe-shaped confetti – at a wedding possibly stems from some notion of deterring demons who may cause barrenness.[4] Shoes were also used as a form of protection for children; a north German superstition, for example, maintained that so long as a child's first shoe is kept within the home, the child will come to no harm.[5]



*A child's shoe found concealed up a chimneybreast in a
farmhouse in Ilkley, Yorkshire. Photograph by Ceri Houlbrook.*

As stated above, these are all just theories. Of course, different objects were probably concealed for different reasons, and there's no way of knowing what those reasons were. But the general consensus does appear to be that the custom of concealment was motivated by anxiety, whether concern about disease and fire or fear of witches and demons. Fertility rites would fit with this theory: childbearing is, after all, rife with anxiety. As they do now, hope, worry, and fear surrounded conception, pregnancy, childbirth, and the wellbeing of the baby once it's delivered. So is it surprising that people would employ any means available to them in

order to increase the chances of a successful pregnancy?

[1] Swann, J. 2015. Shoes Concealed in Buildings. In Hutton, R. (ed.) *Physical Evidence for Ritual Acts, Sorcery and Witchcraft in Christian Britain: A Feeling for Magic*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 118-130, 121

- [2] Radford, E. & Radford, M. A. 1948. *Encyclopaedia of Superstitions*. London: Hutchinson, 305
- [3] Merrifield, R. 1987. *The Archaeology of Ritual and Magic*. London: Batsford, 134
- [4] MacCulloch, J. A. 1920. Shoes and sandals, in *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. 3, eds. J. Hastings, L. H. Gray & J. A. Selvia. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 476
- [5] van Driel-Murray. C. 1999. And did those feet in ancient time ... feet and shoes as a material projection of the self, in *Trac 98: Proceedings of the Eighth Annual Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference Leicester 1998*, eds. P. Baker, C. Forcey, S. Jundi & R. Witcher. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 131–40, 136.

Bio: With a PhD in Archaeology, Ceri Houlbrook considers herself a historical ethnographer and archaeologist, and is particularly interested in the material culture of popular customs and beliefs. She's currently a Postdoctoral Researcher on the 'Inner Lives: Emotions, Identity and the Supernatural, 1300-1900' project at the University of Hertfordshire, working alongside Prof. Owen Davies on the 'Concealed Revealed'. This project strand is aiming to survey concealed deposits across the British Isles and beyond, and to consider the 'afterlives' of these hidden objects by engaging with their contemporary finders and custodians. Please visit the project website (<https://theconcealedrevealed.wordpress.com/>), add a find yourself to our growing survey on Historypin (<https://www.historypin.org/en/person/66740>), or contact Ceri directly with any knowledge, ideas, or stories you have on c.houlbrook@herts.ac.uk or Twitter [@ConcealReveal](https://twitter.com/ConcealReveal).

Posted in: Blog Posts, Latest Post | Tagged: charms, concealed objects, fertility

Dr Ciara Meehan

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University of Hertfordshire.

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Monday, May 16, 2016

The Coney Island Merman Sightings



I found the following tidbit in 'Broadbrim's New York Letter' printed in *The Carbon Advocate (Lehightown, PA)* for Saturday, December 12, 1885:

Our sister city, Brooklyn, is greatly exercised about a wild man of the sea, which, if the story is to be believed, would show that the mermen of the sea are not all dead. For ten days past a man has been seen on Coney Island beach,

disporting himself in the briny waves as if they were his native element. The hair on his head reaches to his waist, and the yellow hair on his body is as long as a horse's mane. Many people have seen him at night walking along the sand, but as soon as he was approached he dashed into the breakers, and no one has seen him come out. But that he does come out is evident, for he has been seen by many, men and women. Towards night men go armed with hatchets and clubs for fear the wild man might grab them up and carry them into the sea. Women and children keep close indoors, and a reign of terror of this submarine hairy man has shaken New York's favorite watering place from turret to foundation stone. People are afraid to shoot him for fear they might possibly be indicted for killing a harmless lunatic. Hundreds are watching for the wild man of the sea, and I should not be surprised when he is caught to find that it was another ingenious device of that aquatic blatherskite, Captain Paul Boyton, to advertise his life-saving suit. If it is not Boyton it is the ----.



The word 'blatherskite' means '*a person who talks at great length without making much sense*' '*foolish talk; nonsense*'. The description was used in reference to **Captain Paul Boyton**, known as the Fearless Frogman, who was a showman and adventurer who some credit as having spurred worldwide interest in water sports as a hobby, particularly open-water swimming. Boyton is best known for his water stunts that captivated the world, including crossing the English Channel in a novel rubber suit that functioned similarly to a kayak.

Just prior to the publishing of story, Boyton was involved in the fatal leap

from Brooklyn Bridge of Robert Emmet Odlum, brother of women's rights activist Charlotte Odlum Smith. Catherine Odlum, mother of Robert and Charlotte, blamed Boyton for her son's death. Boyton wrote Mrs. Odlum a letter disclaiming responsibility, which he also published in The New York Times and other periodicals. Mrs. Odlum subsequently traveled to New York City to see Boyton. According to her account, Boyton sent two men to see her who claimed to be a lawyer and a judge, and who warned her not to say anything against Boyton to avoid prosecution for slander. Catherine Odlum claimed in the biography she wrote of her son that Boyton hid or destroyed letters and telegrams from himself to Robert Odlum urging him to travel to New York and make the Brooklyn Bridge jump.

ROBERT EMMET ODLUM,

the Washington Professor of Swimming who was killed in his jump from the Brooklyn Bridge, New York, the 19th inst., has been suitably buried here. The death of this daring man and peerless swimmer has caused much regret among Washingtonians who merely knew the hero by sight reputation. A man of undoubted courage, frank, honest, generous, and enthusiast in the art he so devotedly pursued. Odlum had many admirers, and few real friends. He had lost occupation by the burning of the National Theatre last February, and had doubtless suffered for want of the necessities of life, although he had saved a dozen lives. Embarrassed, desirous of fame only for money's sake he was driven to attempt a feat that, under more favorable circumstances, he might have postponed forever. - Western Sentinel (Winston, NC) - May 28, 1995



After the incident, Boyton left New York City and formed an aquatic circus, touring as the main act in Barnum's circus during 1887. He settled in Chicago in 1888 and noted the success of the attractions Midway at Chicago's Columbian Exposition of 1892. Building on this, in 1894, he opened the first "permanent" amusement park (Paul Boyton's Water Chutes) in Chicago, which was also the first park of any type to charge an admission. Strangely enough, he bought 16

acres of land and opened the Sea Lion Park on Coney Island in 1895, fenced the property and charged admission. It would later become Coney Island Amusement Park. You can find his story at Paul Boyton: Sideshow World

Amusing the Million: Coney Island at the Turn of the Century (American Century)

The Story of Paul Boyton: Voyages on All The Great Rivers of The World, Paddling Over Twenty-Five Thousand Miles in a Rubber Dress; A Rare Tale of ... in Distant Lands



Among Strange People

Mermaids 101: Exploring the Magical Underwater World of the Merpeople

Spirits, Fairies, and Merpeople: Native Stories of Other Worlds

Posted by Lon Strickler at 4:48 PM



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James Tracy, conspiracy professor, sues FAU for wrongful firing

palmbeachpost.com

PalmBeachPost.com

8:19 a.m. Tuesday, April 26, 2016 | Filed in: Crime

James Tracy, a former Florida Atlantic University professor known for suggesting the 2012 Sandy Hook Elementary School massacre was a hoax, has filed a lawsuit against the university for wrongful termination and violation of his right to free speech.

The lawsuit was filed in federal court Monday and names as defendants the university, its Board of Trustees members, Florida Atlantic's president and other administrators, as well as members of the faculty union that once provided him with legal representation.



James Tracy, former Florida Atlantic University professor

The 50-page complaint, provided to The Palm Beach Post by Tracy's attorney, Louis Leo IV of Coconut Creek, claims the university violated Tracy's constitutional rights when they stripped him of his tenure and fired him on Jan. 8.

Tracy, who for years taught a course titled "Culture of Conspiracy," was first cast into the limelight three years ago after claims on his private blog, MemoryHole, that the Sandy Hook massacre — which left 26 dead in Newtown, Conn., on Dec. 14, 2012 — was staged to

boost support for gun control.

Tracy was fired for failing to submit paperwork detailing his activities outside the university, including his personal blog, according to his termination letter.

The lawsuit claims the university's request to detail Tracy's outside activities is "unconstitutionally overbroad and vague" and "restricts faculty expression and freedom of speech," according to the complaint.

The lawsuit also claims that Tracy, who was reprimanded following his original claims about Sandy Hook in 2013, was unconstitutionally disciplined.

Tracy was first provided a lawyer by the university's faculty union and later fired the union-funded attorney and opted to hire a private attorney in late January.

The lawsuit suggests that faculty union President Robert Zoeller Jr. and a senior director, Michael Moats, conspired with and aided the university in Tracy's termination.

Tracy himself held the position of faculty union president between 2009 and 2010, when he fought off five wrongful terminations in the university's College of Engineering, the lawsuit

says.

The complaint says faculty union representatives at one point strongly suggested Tracy resign before he was fired.

Following the original Sandy Hook controversy, Tracy continued to publish blog posts claiming that the Boston bombing, the Navy Yard shooting in Washington, D.C., and the massacre in San Bernardino, Calif., among other incidents, were staged.

Tracy said he endured years of harassment from colleagues, donors and parents because of his controversial research, according to his personnel file released in late February.

He included a university-approved disclaimer on his blog that made it clear he was publishing as an individual rather than a university representative.

Florida Atlantic University is home to more than 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students. It's also one of the county's largest employers with more than 3,000 employees and an operating budget of more than \$700 million.

FAU President John Kelly has expressed plans to make the school the nation's fastest-improving public research university

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Russia reveals cost of preserving Lenin's body - BBC News

bbc.com



By News from Elsewhere... ...as found by BBC Monitoring

■ 13 April 2016



Lenin's body, seen here in 1991, has been on display for more than 90 years

Russia's government has announced it will spend up to 13m roubles (\$200,000; £140,000) this year on preserving Vladimir Lenin's embalmed body.

The amount, published in a notice on the State Procurement Agency website, will be used to keep the late leader's remains in what the RBK news website calls a "lifelike condition". The notice

says the work required is of a "biomedical nature", that the federal budget will foot the bill, and that a provider has already been found, although not named. A laboratory currently called the Russian Biomedical Technology Research and Training Centre has carried out all repairs to Lenin's body since it was first put on public display in Moscow's Red Square in 1924.

In the post-Soviet years there have been many calls for Lenin to be buried rather than kept on public display in his glass coffin. A recent online poll of more than 8,000 Russians found that 62% were in favour of giving him a proper burial, although the idea has previously been dismissed by the Kremlin.

News of Lenin's maintenance budget hasn't gone down well among social media users. On the Komsomolskaya Pravda website some deplore the cost of keeping a "mummy" on display, while others complain that Lenin himself would have opposed being treated as an "idol". One person sardonically suggests that the Communists hope to clone the Bolshevik leader if they ever return to power, and another says that if they're going to bury Lenin they should first dig up post-Soviet President Boris Yeltsin.

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A recent University of Notre Dame study found that there was a 133% increase in the risk of a mother dying in the two years immediately following the death of her child.

Filmmaker David Cronenberg was offered the directorial reins on *Flashdance*, *Top Gun*, *Witness*, *The Juror* and *The Truman Show*, but turned them all down.

According to forensic psychiatrist Paul Mullen, the first mass shooting in modern society took place in the towns of Degerloch and Mühlhausen an der Enz, Germany, on September 4, 1913, when Ernst August Wagner went on a rampage, killing his family as well as nine more strangers.

Before Canadian director Mary Harron adapted Bret Easton Ellis' controversial 1991 novel *American Psycho*, Johnny Depp suggested to producer Edward Pressman that Stuart Gordon (*Re-Animator*) direct him in a black and white X-rated version of the film.

An eighteen-year-old Taiwanese man collapsed and died after renting a private room at an internet café and playing *Diablo III* for 40 hours straight, without once stopping for food.

In *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1996), Val Kilmer was supposed to play the UN diplomat who discovers the island and serves as the movie's narrator. But after signing on, he demanded his role be reduced by 40 percent, so he was given the part of Montgomery, Dr. Moreau's assistant.

In 1998, Werner Shenke choked to death after biting off another man's earlobe during a particularly brutal barroom brawl in Bremen, Germany.

In 2002, a Japanese television network pulled its annual broadcast of a hotdog-eating competition after a twelve-year-old viewer choked to death while attempting to mimic the speed-eating championship he was watching.

Michael Marin collapsed and died in an Arizona courtroom in late July, just moments after being convicted of arson: he committed suicide using a concealed, homemade cyanide capsule.

Thomas Harris' 2006 novel *Hannibal Rising* was originally titled *Behind the Mask* and *The Lecter Variations* at various points during its writing.

Hans K. Rausing, the billionaire heir to the Tetra Pak fortune, has received a ten-month suspended sentence for not reporting his wife's death for more than two months; instead, he left her corpse to decay beneath a pile of clothes and taped-together garbage bags in the family home.

Anthrax guitarist and long-time Stephen King fan Scott Ian recently listed *Salem's Lot* as his favourite King book, calling it "the greatest vampire story."

New Jersey authorities suspect cult involvement after a 98-year-old woman's corpse was recently stolen from a Greenfield Cemetery mausoleum, where she'd been interred for sixteen years.

During a crackdown on illegal exotic animal sales in Bangkok in 2004, many merchants dumped their stock of piranhas into the city's waterways.

Stephen King once said that every author of suspense should write at least one tale about "a ghostly room at an inn."

Taphephobia is the fear of being buried alive.

Frank Sinatra was so enraged that his new wife, Mia Farrow, wouldn't quit *Rosemary's Baby* to star in his 1968 film *The Detective* that he had divorce papers served to her right on set, in front of the cast and crew. She was devastated but insisted on finishing the day's shoot.

A Georgia man claims he was fired earlier this year after refusing to wearing a "666" sticker at work, because he considers the number to be the mark of the beast. Employees at the company are expected to wear different digits each day to celebrate the number of accident-free days at its factory.

After dying at age 52 from complications due to a ruptured appendix, magician Harry Houdini was laid to rest in a bronze casket with a glass top and silk lining. He had built it a month earlier to use in his act.

Back when hangings were commonplace, people could often be heard chanting "Hats off" as criminals ascended the scaffold. This was a plea for those standing in front to remove their hats, so those standing further back could see the execution.

Former scream queen Jamie Lee Curtis (*Halloween*, *Prom Night*) has authored nine kids' books since 1993, through HarperCollins' children's imprint.

Desperate for rhinoplasty, London, England's Jason Burton died from a serious infection after attempting to give himself a nose job with a chisel and a chicken bone.

When the body of Lupe Velez, a Mexican actress who found success in Hollywood in the 1920s and '30s, was brought home for burial following her suicide, so many fans attended her funeral that several people, including her own sister, ended up trampled and injured after the crowd surged forward attempting to see the star one final time.

When the word "excarnation" is used in regards to funerary practices, it means that the body of the deceased was fed to wild animals.

The train used in the 1980 Canadian horror film *Terror Train* was an actual repainted locomotive. After filming, it was returned to its original colour and state and put back into service for more than twenty years.

Thomas Towler, a 79-year-old British man, died after the regulator on his feeding machine malfunctioned and pumped five times the normal amount of food into his stomach.

William Peter Blatty's *The Exorcist III* was the favourite film of serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer.

Earlier this year, a desk clerk was fired after he put the body of a 96-year-old suicide victim in a dumpster behind his workplace. Rigor mortis had set in and he believed the woman's corpse was a dummy left outside as an April Fool's Day prank.

Liam Neeson was considered for the role of Dracula in Fred Dekker's *Monster Squad*, but the part went to Duncan Regehr. Neeson was paid for a bit part that was never shot.

On May 22 of this year, in the northern French town of Longwy, a "female Hannibal Lecter" killed her 80-year-old husband with a kitchen mortar, then cooked his heart, nose and genitals. She was sent to a prison psychiatric unit to undergo tests.

The Canadian zombie movie *Pontypool* was shot in a Toronto church just a block away from *Rue Morgue's* former headquarters. The church was later turned into condos where editor-in-chief Dave Alexander lived for several years.

Vampyroteuthis infernalis, lit. ("vampire squid of Hell") is a small, deep-sea cephalopod found throughout the temperate and tropical oceans of the world. The animal's dark colour, cloak-like webbing, and red eyes gave it its name, though it does not feed on blood.

A labor of love for Guillermo del Toro, *The Devil's Backbone* was sixteen years in development and written when the director was still in college.

Before her death on April 7, television personality Peaches Geldof posted a selfie on Instagram taken in the bathroom of her house in Kent, England, which included a ghostly hand at her shoulder. She believed it belonged to the friendly phantom of a woman who committed suicide in the bath.

The startling shot of a woman leaping off the side of a building in Kiyoshi Kurosawa's *Kairo* was achieved by having a stunt-woman filmed bungee-jumping off the rooftop, followed by a look-alike dummy; the two shots were edited together and the bungee cord digitally erased.

In the Swedish vampire film *Let the Right One In*, sound effects were achieved by biting into sausages to replicate biting into skin and flesh, drinking yogurt to sound like drinking blood, and rubbing the skin of two grapes to emulate the sound of children blinking.

Romanian lawyer Madalin Ciculescu took four priests and an Orthodox bishop to court earlier this year because they failed to exorcise flatulent demons that he claimed were ruining his business. However, he failed to convince judges in Pitesti, Romania and lost his case.

Tom Savini has often said that he considers his best F/X work to be in Joseph Zito's *The Prowler*.

During the recording of Iron Maiden's 1982 album *Number of the Beast*, producer Martin Birch was involved in a car accident with a mini-bus transporting a group of nuns. The repair bill was £666.

In 2012, when after complaining to her family members that she was fed up with waiting for the Grim Reaper, Anastasia Khoreva, 105, decided to go meet him and hanged herself in her bedroom in Darsun, Russia after her relatives had gone out.

Stephen King based the protagonist of his debut novel, *Carrie*, on two girls he knew while at school. Both were social outcasts from deeply religious families and died while still in their twenties.

In 2008, David Phyll, 50 – the last resident in a block of flats due to be demolished in Bishopstoke, England – decapitated himself with a chainsaw to highlight the injustice of being forced to move out.

Best selling romance novelist Kate Coscarelli, who passed away in 1999, was the mother of *Phantasm* director Don Coscarelli. She wrote a novelization of the movie and even appeared in a brief cameo as a funeral guest.

In March of this year, the skeletal remains of twin brothers Andrew and Anthony Johnson were found seated in recliners outside the Chatanooga, Tennessee home they shared for decades. The inseparable brothers, both 63, had been dead for three years.

The small town of Santa Mira used in *Halloween III: Season of the Witch* (1982) was also the setting for *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956).

The only known human deaths outside the Earth's atmosphere belong to Georgy Dobrovolsky, Vladislav Volkov and Viktor Patsayev, Soviet cosmonauts who died in 1971 when their Soyuz-11 spacecraft depressurized during preparations for reentry.

In 2012, Edward Archbold, 32, from West Palm Beach, Florida, died after winning a cockroach eating contest. The cause of death was determined to be accidental choking due to "arthropod body parts."

Phobophobia is a mortal fear of developing a phobia.

When Anthony Perkins expressed doubts about reprising the role of Norman Bates in *Psycho II*, Christopher Walken was considered for the role. Perkins, of course, eventually took the role.

Robert Williams, a Ford assembly line worker, became the first human in history to have been killed by a robot, after being hit by a robotic arm in 1979.

While doing publicity photos for the 1920 film *Haunted Spooks*, actor Harold Lloyd mistook a real bomb for a prop, which then exploded in his hand. He lost his thumb and index finger, suffered serious burns to his face and was temporarily blinded.

Scientists in Switzerland claim to have "created" ghosts by replicating conditions wherein the mind momentarily loses track of the body's location, causing the illusion of a presence in the room. The effects were so realistic that two of the participants asked for the experiments to stop.

Do You Have The Guts To Look This Creepy Doll In The Eyes?

huffingtonpost.com

HUFFPOST WEIRD NEWS

Do You Have The Guts To Look This Creepy Doll In The Eyes?

“We heard she was afraid of the dark so we have a light on her at all times.”

04/27/2016 12:00 pm ET



The-Line-Up.com

Most people only need two seconds to figure out if a doll is creepy.

The employees of one New York City website apparently need two weeks.

From now until May 10, people who log on to The Lineup, a site devoted to all things creepy, is hosting a live web stream of “Ann,” a doll rumored to be haunted by the restless spirit of a 13-year-old girl.

That 13-year-old girl supposedly died in the early 1900s while being treated for tuberculosis at Waverly Hills Sanatorium in Louisville, Kentucky.

Website spokeswoman Jennifer Johnson said they picked up “Ann” for \$100 on eBay from a paranormal group in Ohio whose name she can’t remember.

“We did the ‘Buy It Now’ option,” she said. “We unboxed her last week and put in a storage closet at our offices in New York.

“We heard she was afraid of the dark so we have a light on her at all times.”

People who want to see if Ann is haunted for themselves can view the live stream via Youtube.

It may be slow-going but Johnson said a couple of bizarre things have already happened.

“Our live stream went dead at one point and it turns out the computer cord was physically removed,” she said. “The time stamp on the computer said 8:27 — a time when no one was in the office.”

Johnson also says people have been having strange problems with their phones. At one point during her phone conversation with HuffPost, the phone went dead.

At one point, an employee attempted to talk with “Ann.”

"We had an electro-magnetic frequency sensor near the doll that was silent," Johnson said. "One of my co-workers said, 'Hi Ann, welcome to the office' and the sensor went off."



Between now and May 10, "Ann" will be tested, observed and analyzed by paranormal experts.

But she better not get used to her surroundings because she won't be at the office very long.

Johnson said the website is holding an essay contest where people explain why they'd be the best home for a supposedly haunted doll.

The person who sends the most creative and heartfelt essay to contest@the-line-up.com

will win "Ann" for their very own.

Johnson thinks that's actually a good deal.

"She doesn't seem malevolent," she said.

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Cement Shoes Were an Urban Crime Myth—Until Now

201605050125

thedailybeast.com

Michael Daly**05.04.16 6:25 PM ET**

A Brooklyn street gang member got a mob flick sendoff.

Cement overshoes have long figured in Mafia mythology, but until this week no cop in New York—or seemingly anywhere else in America—had seen them actually used to ensure a victim sleeps with the fishes.

Around 10:20 a.m. Monday, police learned via 911 that a Kingsborough Community College student had spied a body washed up on the Brooklyn shoreline. The body was that of was a 6-foot-1 male wrapped in black plastic contractors bags. His head was entirely covered with grey duct tape. His arms were bound behind him with rope.

And both his feet were embedded in a five-gallon black plastic bucket filled with hardened concrete up to mid-shin.

“I’ve actually never seen cement overshoes before,” a police commander said.

He wondered aloud if this was the work of the Mafia, myth made real.

The mere thought was immediately dismissed by a veteran Brooklyn detective well versed in the mob’s long history in the concrete industry.

“This isn’t the wise guys,” the detective said. “They do concrete better than this. This is a bullshit job!”

The detective’s experienced eye noted that the concrete was honeycombed with air pockets and was generally a less than practiced pour. His immediate appraisal that this was not the work of the Mafia seemed confirmed when the victim was identified.

He was Peter “Petey Crack” Martinez, said by police to be a senior member of the G Stone Crips. Other members of this Brooklyn street gang allegedly include the jailed rap star Bobby Shmurda.

Martinez had been reported missing on Feb. 5 by a lady friend, who told police that she had last seen him as he set off to get his hair braided. Detectives marveled at the perfect condition of Martinez’s braids after almost three months in the water.

“His hair is perfectly braided still,” the commander said. “It’s like he just stepped out of the salon. His fingers fell off, but his hair is beautiful still.”

The commander asked the detectives if there were any bullet wounds.

“Not new ones,” a detective replied.

Martinez had been shot in the leg back in 2008 and his assailant had been arrested. He himself had been arrested 31 times on charges that included burglary and using a forged instrument.

The exact cause of death was to be determined by an autopsy, but it seems that Martinez might very well have been alive when his head was wrapped with the duct tape.

“Like mummy style,” the commander said.

The detectives were not immediately able to determine if Martinez had been alive when his feet were stuck in the bucket. One reason cement overshoes had remained just a bit of gangland lore for so long is the problem of how to keep the victim’s feet immobile in the stuff until it hardens.

The commander noted that a rope tied the bucket to the body.

“But that doesn’t seem necessary,” the commander said.

However it was done, there was no denying that through the months in the water—which apparently included what would have been Martinez’s 28th birthday in March—his feet had remained solidly in the concrete despite the questionable quality of the pour.

“You could actually stand him up like a statue if you wanted,” the commander said. “Not that you would want to.”

The cement overshoes had apparently served their immediate purpose and Martinez had not just popped to the surface when the water warmed, as bodies often do in New York waters. He and his concrete overshoes seemed to have finally been dragged to Manhattan Beach by the strong currents in that particular area.

Back in 2011, a man was found actually wearing cement overshoes at the Antalya waterfalls in Turkey. But numerous other reports and rumors of cement overshoes in various countries over the years appear to have been unsubstantiated.

One might argue that the reason no cases have been confirmed is that cement overshoes have effectively caused bodies to disappear. But the Mafia has been riddled with so many high-level informants in recent years that at least one instance would almost certainly have come to light had there been any. Cement overshoes seemed to have been the stuff of street corner fantasies and tough guy novels.

Until now.

The police commander theorized that the killers had been acting out something they had seen in some mob flick.

“They wanted to be gangsters,” the commander suggested.

The cinematic effect was heightened by a large tattoo on the victim's back.

"It is an image of the Virgin Mary with a rose," Chief of Detectives Robert Boyce said at a press briefing.

Boyce proved a master of terse summary after he described the black plastic and the duct tape and the feet "submerged in poured concrete."

"Obviously a homicide," Boyce said.

Martinez was found wearing a black jacket, gray sweatpants, and blue boxer shorts under the black plastic bags. The rental car he had on the day of his disappearance had been found abandoned. There are several theories as to why he had met his particular end, ranging from gang rivalry to a drug deal gone bad to an unpaid debt to a failed scam.

The commander was able to make one deduction with some confidence about the man who wore New York's first cement overshoes on record.

"He pissed somebody off," the commander said.

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Crocheted animal skeletons show the grim process of death and decay

dangerousminds.net

Crocheted animal skeletons show the grim process of death and decay



You know about the idea of the “memento mori,” right? *Memento mori* is Latin for “reminder of death” (as well as the title of a peculiar novel by Muriel Spark). The practice of tangible reminders of one’s own impending death dates back to ancient Rome, but it has been common throughout Europe from medieval times up through the present day. In the 16th century, Mary Queen of Scots, for instance, owned a

large watch carved in the form of a silver skull that was adorned with some poetry by Horace.

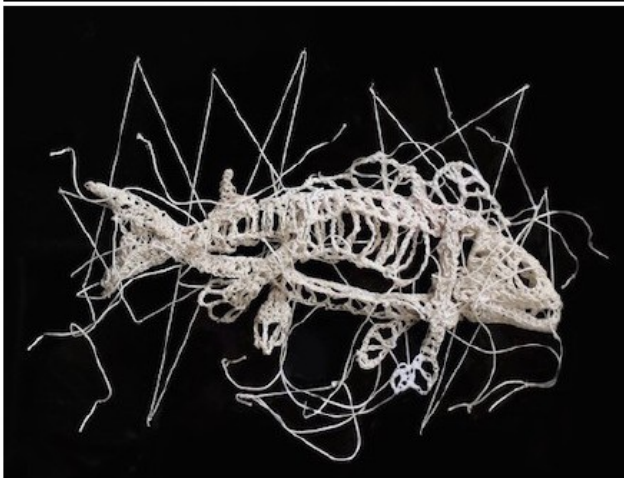
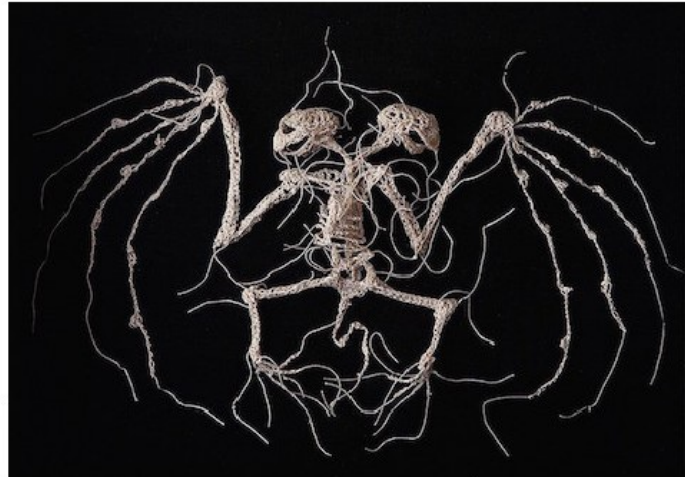
In olden times, *memento mori* often took the form of human skulls intended to be displayed on one’s desk, as a constant reminder of the fact that “a certain convocation of politic worms” (*Hamlet*, Act 4, scene iii) will be munching at your very corpse one day or other.

For a contemporary instance of the *memento mori*, you can’t do much better than the recent work by artist Caitlin T. McCormack. For some years now, McCormack has been fashioning fascinating animal skeletons by crocheting cotton string that has been fortified with glue.

As she writes on her website,

The act of stiffening intricately crocheted cotton string with glue produces material that is structurally similar to delicate bone tissue. The string implemented in this process can be viewed as the basic cellular unit of fabrication, and by utilizing media and practices inherited from my deceased relatives, I aim to generate emblems of my diminishing bloodline, embodied by each organism’s skeletal remains.

The reference to her “deceased relatives” serves as kind a dog whistle to her death-obsessed devotees in the audience.



There
are many
more

examples on McCormack's website.

Posted by Martin Schneider



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With court ruling, sodomy law doesn't apply to cases with unconscious victims

By CLIFTON ADCOCK *Oklahoma Watch* | 9 comments

Posted: Tuesday, April 26, 2016 12:00 am | Updated: 12:22 am, Tue Apr 26, 2016.

tulsaworld.com



Clifton Adcock/Oklahoma Watch

Oklahoma Watch: Sodomy ruling

The Tulsa County District Attorney's Office filed sodomy and rape charges against a 17-year-old boy in April 2015. The case was ultimately rejected.

Tulsa World file

Tulsa prosecutors say they are angry over a ruling by Oklahoma's highest criminal court that the state's forcible sodomy law doesn't apply when the victim is intoxicated or unconscious.

The decision by the Oklahoma Court of Criminal Appeals contrasts with a national push to step up enforcement of sexual assault laws and toughen rules of sexual consent.

On March 24, the Court of Criminal Appeals found that because of the way the state's sodomy law is written, "forcible sodomy cannot occur where a victim is so intoxicated as to be completely unconscious at the time of the sexual act of oral copulation."

The ruling denied an appeal by the Tulsa County District Attorney's Office in a case arising from an incident between two high school students in 2014. The appeals court wrote that the original ruling in November by a Tulsa County judge dismissing the case was not in error.

Although Oklahoma's rape law says a rape can occur when the victim is intoxicated or unconscious, the forcible sodomy law does not contain that language. The appeals court unanimously ruled that because the law lacks that provision, the defendant could not be prosecuted.

The boy, who was 17 at the time, was charged as a youthful offender, meaning, if convicted, he could have been moved to a prison at age 19 if he didn't meet certain conditions in the juvenile system.

"We will not, in order to justify prosecution of a person for an offense, enlarge a statute beyond the fair meaning of its language," the appeals court wrote in what is called an "unpublished opinion," meaning it cannot be cited as a precedent.

Benjamin Fu, Tulsa County assistant district attorney and director of the office's special victims unit, called the court's interpretation "insane," "dangerous" and "offensive." He said the court had the authority and precedent to determine that the Legislature intended to include intoxication and unconsciousness in the sodomy law. As a comparison, Fu referred to the fact that an intruder who enters the unlocked door of a home can be still charged with breaking and entering.

"I told the court that this (argument) is absurd," said Fu, the lead prosecutor in the case. "And their response was essentially, 'We're not going to create a crime where one does not exist.'"

Fu said he and law enforcement officials plan to push for legislation to address the discrepancy in rape and sodomy laws.

The case in question involves two high school students who were drinking and smoking marijuana with several friends at a Tulsa park into the early morning hours of June 1, 2014.

The female student, who was 16 at the time, had drunk a large quantity of vodka; blood tests would later show her blood-alcohol level at 0.341, more than four times the legal limit to drive and indicative of severe alcohol poisoning, court records state.

(Oklahoma Watch is withholding the names of the defendant and the victim because of their ages and because it generally does not identify victims of sexual assault.)

Court transcripts showed several other minors who were present testified that the girl was stumbling and falling. The group agreed to allow the defendant in the case, who attended the same school, to take her in his car to someplace where she could stay.

Records state that two boys had to pick the girl up and carry her to the car. Another boy who rode with the two but was later dropped off testified that the girl was drifting in and out of consciousness and could not walk.

Later, the defendant brought the girl, who still was not conscious, to her grandmother's house, and the family took her to a Tulsa hospital. A sexual assault examination was conducted, and the boy's DNA was found on her, court records show.

In an interview with police, the defendant said the victim engaged in consensual oral sex with him and it was her idea. The girl told officers she could not remember anything after being at the park.

Prosecutors initially charged the boy with first-degree rape and forcible oral sodomy, but because there was no evidence showing he had raped the girl, that charge was dismissed.

Later, Tulsa County District Court Judge Patrick Pickerill dismissed the forcible oral sodomy charge, stating unconsciousness and intoxication are not present in the law's definition of the crime.

Fu said he does not blame the Legislature for not addressing the issue earlier; rather he blames the court's interpretation of the statute.

"My argument was that if you rule today that because she was intoxicated it can't be force, then ... you'll have to engage in what I can only refer to as the 'orifice test,'" Fu said. "Whereby the contact by the defendant and the state of mind of the victim are the exact same. It just depends on (the location of the sexual act)."

Shannon McMurray, attorney for the defendant, said prosecutors handled the case poorly and a charge of sexual battery would have been more appropriate. However, because the girl did not remember, it would still be difficult to prove she did not consent, McMurray said.

"They (prosecutors) were trying to substitute one element for the other, meaning intoxication in the rape statute, when there was absolutely no evidence of force or him doing anything to make this girl give him oral sex other than she was too intoxicated to consent," McMurray said.

"The court agreed what the state was attempting to do was rewrite statute and add an element," McMurray said. "You can't substitute force with intoxication under the law."

Because the case was unpublished, it does not set a hard legal precedent, Fu said. But the interpretation could allow others convicted under similar circumstances to be freed if they appeal.

The argument is also already being used in similar cases and would make it much harder for some sexual assault victims to come forward and report the crime, he said.

"All this does is add to the fire," Fu said. "Their (sexual assault victims') biggest fear is that people they tell the story to won't understand or will judge them for their behavior. If they had that concern, the Court of Criminal Appeals affirmed that, 5-0."

Posted in Courts, Homepagelatest, News, Local, State on *Tuesday, April 26, 2016 12:00 am. Updated: 12:22 am.* | Tags: Benjamin Fu, Court Of Criminal Appeals, Sodomy, Powell V. State, Section 839 A Of Title 10 United States Code 925 - Article 125., Attorney, Law Enforcement Officials Plan, Oklahoma, Forcible Sodomy Law, Tulsa County District Court, Oklahoma Court, Rape Law, Tulsa Hospital, District Attorney And Director, Lead Prosecutor, Patrick Pickerill, Assistant District Attorney, United States, Tulsa County District Attorney S Office, Shannon McMurray, Sodomy Law, Judge, Law Lacks, Tulsa County, Tulsa County Judge, Tulsa

9 comments:

- **mary hughes posted at 7:11 pm on Tue, Apr 26, 2016.**

Mr. Fu needs to go back to law school. What an embarrassment. Doesn't the DA have any control over the office?

- **Dana Asher posted at 9:53 am on Tue, Apr 26, 2016.**

What!!!.... no lick laws in Oklahoma???

- **Amy Miller posted at 10:34 pm on Mon, Apr 25, 2016.**

It's rape if she is too intoxicated to consent, which she obviously was. It should also, obviously, apply to forcible sodomy, oral or otherwise. That's legally rape, though. Just shy of statutory rape, too.

- **grant holm posted at 5:19 am on Tue, Apr 26, 2016.**

The statutory consent law is intended to protect socially immature and sometimes sickos. grown men having relations with physically mature but gullible girls

- **Dianna Smith posted at 9:15 pm on Mon, Apr 25, 2016.**

Ok, so just ADD the freakin language to the law!!!

- **L Lamb posted at 7:40 pm on Mon, Apr 25, 2016.**

Just another symptom of the slippery slope of moral decay that we are on. The courts are out of touch with morality. Justice Kennedy should be proud.

- **William Dusenberry posted at 3:34 pm on Mon, Apr 25, 2016.**

This court ruling, must have been inspired by god -- the Christian god.

Because my god, would never support such an unfair law.

But the Christian god, punishes the decedents of the lawbreaker, as well as the lawbreaker.

And, if one is intoxicated, or otherwise passed-out; god considers being such, as contributory negligence.

God, as is well known -- works in strange ways, his wonders to perform.

• **Amy Miller posted at 4:54 am on Tue, Apr 26, 2016.**

No God has anything to do with it. Probably the right person had money.

• **grant holm posted at 2:28 pm on Mon, Apr 25, 2016.**

Easy fix, rewrite the law

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We think our attitudes to death are unchanging. They're not | Lindsey Fitzharris

theguardian.com

Lindsey Fitzharris

Death rituals such as the anglers who turned their friend's ashes into fishing bait are nothing new. In the west, we could learn much from other cultures



'In Tana Toraja in Indonesia, they hold a festival called Ma'nene, during which they remove the bodies of favoured ancestors from their coffins and clean and dress them. Sometimes they even walk them around the village.' Photograph: Paul Koudounaris
Ma'nene festival of corpses, Indonesia. Photograph: Paul Koudounaris
Ma'nene festival of corpses, Indonesia. Photograph: Paul Koudounaris

Tuesday 3 May 2016 04.47 EDT

The 18th-century printer and type designer John Baskerville (he of the "Baskerville font") was so averse to religion and its conventions that he requested that, upon his death, his body be buried upright in a specially prepared vault in an old mill on his property. In 1775, his wishes were fulfilled. In 1821, however, a canal was built locally and the mill was destroyed. The landowner at the time put Baskerville's body on display until his descendants had it moved to a crypt in Christ Church, Birmingham. In 1897, the church was demolished and poor Baskerville's remains were moved again, this time to the catacombs of Warstone Lane Cemetery. In 1963, a petition was

put forward to the Birmingham city council that what little remained of John Baskerville be moved a fifth time to unconsecrated grounds, in keeping with his original wishes.

The petition was denied.

Baskerville wasn't the only person in the 18th century (or indeed any century) to flout traditional death practices. Since time immemorial, people have sought alternative solutions to disposing of human remains. The news stories we see today – like the man whose ashes were turned into fishing bait and used by his friends to catch a 180lb fish – are nothing new.

Dr John Troyer, who heads the Centre for Death & Society at the University of Bath, is currently spearheading the Future Cemetery project in conjunction with Arnos Vale cemetery in Bristol. "The idea was to deliver a large-scale project that experimented with new approaches like projection, augmented reality, and Bluetooth soundscapes to engage visitors with this stunning but sensitive space." In other words, you may someday be able to walk into a cemetery and listen to a hologram of a dead loved one speak about his or her life.

Although some people might be averse to these developments, we should remember that new technologies and death have often gone hand-in-hand in the past. For instance, postmortem photos began to emerge shortly after commercial photography itself became available in 1839, and carried on being popular into the early 20th century. Today, we might liken this to the trend among millennials to take "funeral selfies".

- RexTarsus

19h ago

Perhaps the best thing you can do for the next generation is to be as unpleasant as possible to them, so when you die, they can just dump your ashes somewhere and cheerfully forget you. There is far too much harping on about the dead and gone. Just dump 'em and get on with what life you have left.

- OldBones

19h ago

"The first woman cremated in this country was Honoretta Pratt in 1769" -- well, no. Cremation was prevalent among the early Anglo-Saxons, with inhumation becoming more -- er -- popular with the spread of Christianity and the belief in resurrection, which was presumed to be hampered by the lack of a body.

- Hipphaferalkus OldBones

19h ago

And was also practiced by the Romans and their Romanised populations in Britannia.

- duthealla Hipphaferalkus

17h ago

Britons we used to call em.

- redleader duthealla

17h ago

No, the Britons' own custom was inhumation. Cremation became popular as the population was Romanised - and then fell out of favour again as the Romanised population became Christian. Where Roman influence didn't reach, there was no cremation.

- Erin Wolfe

19h ago

As a Buddhist, we remember death daily and meditate on it. By keeping our impermanence in mind, we live much fuller lives. That said, I don't think I will be requesting a "sky burial," but I haven't ruled it out either 🤔🤔.

- Woopededoop Erin Wolfe

17h ago

Well, I learnt what a sky burial is today, thanks to you :)

- hirpling

19h ago

People in the Baltic still take coffin-photos, with the family ranged around the deah-bed or open coffin.

• dandan0 hirpling

19h ago

Yeah, but they're not exotic enough so the Guardian doesn't think we have anything to learn from them.

• redleader dandan0

19h ago

Dr Paul Koudounaris didn't go to Estonia to see people photographing an open casket - he went to Indonesia to see the Ma'nene festival. There's nothing the evil, all-powerful Guardian can do to change that.

• cyclonemf dandan0

18h ago

This comment was removed by a moderator because it didn't abide by our community standards. Replies may also be deleted. For more detail see our FAQs.

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/ Copyright 2014 Evernote Corporation. All rights reserved. */ .en-markup-crop-options { top: 18px !important; left: 50% !important; margin-left: -100px !important; width: 200px !important; border: 2px rgba(255,255,255,.38) solid !important; border-radius: 4px !important; } .en-markup-crop-options div div:first-of-type { margin-left: 0px !important; }*



Ma'nene festival of corpses, Indonesia. Photograph: Paul Koudounaris
Ma'nene festival of corpses, Indonesia. Photograph: Paul Koudounaris

The desire for alternative death practices is growing, especially among an ageing population of baby boomers who have been accustomed to having a wide range of choice in their lives.

Caitlin Doughty – mortician, writer and founder of the Order of the Good Death – educates the public about their options through her popular YouTube series, Ask a Mortician. She recently opened a new funeral parlour, Undertaking LA, which “allows families to reclaim rightful control of the dying process and care of the dead body”. The bereaved can wash and dress the bodies of their loved ones in preparation for burial. This process brings a mourner closer to death, and breaks down unwarranted fears of the dead body. “It’s what everyone did 150 years ago,” Doughty says, “and it can be a beautiful way to mourn.”

Although this type of intimacy with a corpse might seem alien to us in the west, there are many cultures around the world that have no problem interacting with the dead. Dr Paul Koudounaris – author of *The Empire of Death* – has travelled to more than 70 different countries and encountered countless cultures and belief systems along the way. His book features hundreds of photographs of the dead.

“In Tana Toraja [in Indonesia],” he tells me, “they periodically hold a festival called Ma’nene, during which they remove the bodies of favoured ancestors from their coffins and clean and dress them. Sometimes they even walk them around the village.” This past year, Koudounaris attended Ma’nene. After the festival was over, some villagers asked Koudounaris as an afterthought if he wanted to see their grandmother, whose dead body had been laid out in the hut next to his for the past month. “It was the casualness of it that was really striking,” he says. “In the USA, that would not be a casual situation that would slip one’s mind.”

Koudounaris rightly reminds me that we need to be careful about “treating ‘western culture’ as some homogeneous thing,” and that death rituals in westernised society can vary greatly. That said, the more intimate practices tend to come from non-western areas of the world. What Koudounaris hopes we learn from these cultures is that “the dead can still have a role in society, and that death need not be fatalistic”. Like Doughty, he hopes we can reclaim something from the past that we’ve lost: “The irony is that we once understood this in western society, we were much the same way. We forgot it over the past 200 years, and now we’re seeing a nascent movement to relearn that exact lesson.”

Back in Britain, Troyer continues to push the boundaries with the Future Cemetery project. He reminds us that: “What’s weird today is almost always normalised, forgotten about over time, rediscovered, turned into an ‘alternative’ that seems weird and then becomes normal again.”

Cremation was once considered a radical alternative to burial in Britain. The first woman cremated in this country was Honoretta Pratt in 1769. Today, approximately 75% of Britons are cremated. What will the next big thing in death be for us as we head towards the 22nd century?



Ma'nene festival of corpses, Indonesia. Photograph: Paul Koudounaris
Ma'nene festival of corpses, Indonesia. Photograph: Paul Koudounaris

comments

• Maria Rosa Pereira
7h ago

Why so many people whom despise The Guardian so much take so much time out of their lives to tell or show others they despise The Guardian that much? This is a serious question, since I'm a regular Guardian reader from abroad (not British). It does intrigues me.

• ID2463357 Maria Rosa Pereira
6h ago

It's funny, isn't it? My guess is that a number of news organizations have stopped allowing comments at all. We are awash in digital refugees!

• SenseCir
10h ago

Couldn't care less what happens to my remains after I die. By that point I will have ceased to exist, forever.

• ZankFrappa
12h ago

You should do at least one altruistic, humanitarian act in your life. I'd suggest that in death one can do the same, by donating body or body parts for experimentation or transplant. Anything else strikes me as being vain.

• drycured
12h ago

Put me in a cardboard coffin, take me to the burial site in the back of a mate's van and bury me beneath a native tree seedling. Saves on expenses for my widow, helps the environment, avoids all that religious claptrap and I rather like the thought of my juices eventually fertilising a developing tree. Oh and I forgot the Irish folk miscellany I have already recorded for (some say dubious) entertainment.

• Saarah Nisaa
12h ago

The whole 'parwding' idea reminds me of Richard III who was slain by Henry Tudor at the Battle of Bosworth. It sounds humiliating, I think I actually liked t!Richard the usurper more than his subsequent usurper.

But then his father (years prior), Richard of York, was beheaded: his head put on a pike by Margaret of Anjou whilst wearing a paper crown. I can't think which was worse.

• Saarah Nisaa Saarah Nisaa
12h ago

*parading.

• Saarah Nisaa
12h ago

I don't think I'd like to be paraded around the town when I'm dead- if anything, I think that terrifies me more. I don't want it to become a 'norm' at all. I can imagine that I will be looked after during the parade but, I'd rather just be placed into a coffin and given my much needed rest.

The hologram sounds like a good idea - so long as no one starts their speech with "If you're listening to this, I'm probably dead right now.."

• asparagusnextleft
14h ago

"In other words, you may someday be able to walk into a cemetery and listen to a hologram of a dead loved one speak about his or her life."

Just like this one,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r-Zil3iVgpM>

• jsayles
14h ago

Well for the cost of deaths these days, most of us will be composted in the back garden.

• ID2463357 jsayles
6h ago

I dunno. I think many of us have too much lead and mercury for safe compost.

• TheOverload
16h ago

Avoid it for as long as possible seems to be the evolutionary way.

• Benicek
16h ago

Was this feature a joint enterprise with the last edition of National Geographic or just a coincidence that they covered the same subject?

• iLinda

17h ago

Is it affluenza first world infantilization that precludes huge swaths of people from being able to talk about death with mature, non emotional language?

It struck me as odd that in the UK over the last few days there has been outrage over those tending the dying who actually let people die? What is that all about?

Our 96 year old aunt was rushed to emergency for resuscitation a few weeks ago. She hasn't been out of bed in years and can barely even pay attention to Radio Four. It is cruel to keep corpses draining health care and emotions when the person should be allowed to quietly die.

The other point is even those with 50 year old children will not discuss end of life issues and write Wills. Our documents in Canada cover health directives as well as the usual wrapping up of assets. Those who do not make clear directions end up causing misery and strife.

My other issue is about expensive funerals, what's up with that? It is really easy to skip religion, create a personal memorial that is meaningful for mourners and respects the dead and have a lovely party.

For me it's Quality of Life not Quantity.

• olls25 iLinda
15h ago

Our 96 year old aunt was rushed to emergency for resuscitation a few weeks ago. She hasn't been out of bed in years and can barely even pay attention to Radio Four. It is cruel to keep corpses draining health care and emotions when the person should be allowed to quietly die.

Bit harsh to refer to her as a 'corpse'?...

What if one's aging relative doesn't especially want to die, but feels like they *should* because they are made to feel 'a corpse' weighing down those around them.

What if the health workers around them don't want to be repsonsible for killing someone?

What if venal relatives knock off/pressure to die their aging relatives to benefit from inheritances?

In terms of attitudes to dying: I think a lot of people aren't hugely scared of death per se, so much as of dying.

Since it's likely (thanks to genetic inheritance) to be cancer that carries me off, I hope very much to have the kind of support my dad did when he died last year: NHS staff, district nurses and Marie Curie to help manage his pain relief so that as the cancer tore its way through his organs he felt less and less pain and eventually went off to sleep, dying peacefully a few days later.

- deltajones

18h ago

Nothing to the strange things that prehistoric people did to bodies.

Those postmortem photos of dead children are way creepy though but I guess they were the same people who made hair jewellery.

- ScepticMike

18h ago

Woodland burial under Oak Trees with no silly stuff like coffins or commemorative plaques

We ,that is our conscious self ,disappears and the body is just an animal corpse . This is best faced up to and cremation is a waste of energy .

- redleader ScepticMike

18h ago

I want to go on the compost, but I'd settle for being left out with the recycling (I suspect that "Mrs Leader" won't maintain a compost heap after I'm gone unless we can afford a gardener).

- BlazingArrow ScepticMike

18h ago

Agreed. Coffins, plaques, horse drawn hearses, elaborate floral arrangements etc. funerals are ridiculously expensive and to my mind this expense serves no useful purpose.

- ScepticMike redleader

18h ago

As I understand it it is illegal to be left above ground ,Indeed one of my uncles refused to pay the old fashioned funeral" insurance " saying "they won't leave me on top."

- Amanzim

18h ago

Death is one thing that is certain, other things are less so. Each culture celebrates death differently. In the subcontinent, death is a long ritual. Three days, you are

supposed to leave your doors open for anybody coming to condole and express the sorrow for the loss. Wives are not expected to leave home and mourn the death for at least 40 days. To me it is a ritual and many not very closed to the deceased suffer pretending to show unhappy faces.

What I like about west is that death is mourned by very close family and others carry on going about their lives.

Cremation is getting more popular in west, but Muslims cannot dare do that. Otherwise they will be considered infidels and looked down upon by family.

• redleader Amanzim
18h ago

but Muslims cannot dare do that

They choose not to, the same as all Jews and most Catholics.

Do you think they're scared of bacon, too?

• Amanzim redleader
16h ago

"They choose not to, the same as all Jews and most Catholics." Obviously you do not know how intolerant some believers are. It is complete submission or trouble. Have you heard of Rushdi and Van Gogh?

• redleader Amanzim
15h ago

Jews don't do cremations, and few Catholics. I get that you don't like Pakistanis, don't worry, you've got that across no problem, but their burial customs are the same as Jews and similar to the majority of Catholics (the Orthodox don't do cremation either, by the way).

• bailliegillies
18h ago

Who gives a damn, once I'm dead I'm out of it and couldn't care less.

• Pagey
19h ago

I hope people will eventually drop the nonsensical euphemism "passed" and "passed on" when people die. We need to accept that death is the end of life. I feel it insults the deceased person to pretend they've "gone to a better place".

• humunguslives Pagey
18h ago

People say a lot of things around the time of bereavement, even as an atheist I'm not going to criticise what amounts to shorthand language to help people cope through a very distressing time.

• Disqusagain Pagey
16h ago

what makes you think you can impose your beliefs on others any more than you accept to have theirs imposed upon you?

• Merigold Pagey
15h ago

I felt that too, until I lost my sister.

I am gutted because I don't think there is another side. I will never see her again. Ever. I wish I could hold on to the belief that I will see her again. It would make things easier.

• The_Blind_Beggar
19h ago

I like the traditional Indonesian paper face masks.

• Leopold1904
19h ago

In the west, we could learn much from other cultures

How the Guardian sees EVERYTHING.

• globalgypsy Leopold1904
18h ago

In the west, we could learn much from other cultures

How the Guardian sees EVERYTHING

More like a statement of the bleeding obvious.

• DannySutherland Leopold1904
17h ago

Quite. What can we learn? Abject poverty? Tribalism? Superstition? Or, in this case, digging up corpses? We're far from perfect in the way we order our society, but there really is not much others can teach us.

• redleader DannySutherland
17h ago

Why oh why do we have to know about strange customs in foreign countries? What happens in this country is that you sit down with the undertaker to discuss the type of coffin and whether there will be flowers or donations to charity, then he finds you a minister who asks you about your mother's life so that he can repeat back a garbled version of it to people who actually knew her, quick chorus of What A Friend We Have in Jesus and off to the pub for ham sandwiches and slices of quiche.

So why couldn't we have an article telling us that, in Britain, you sit down with the undertaker to discuss the type of coffin and whether there will be flowers or donations to charity, then he finds you a minister who asks you about your mother's life so that he can repeat back a garbled version of it to people who actually knew her, quick chorus of What A Friend We Have in Jesus and off to the pub for ham sandwiches and slices of quiche? That's what I want to read about – not stuff that other people do over the sea that I never even heard about before.

• olls25

19h ago

Personally I'd like anything in working order (organs etc.) to be donated, and the rest cremated and loaded into fireworks for a nice display for the family.

• lostgirl olls25

10h ago

A group of us did just that with some of the ashes of our dear friend - put them in fireworks and set them off by the river: it was lovely thinking of her rocketing into the sky. Then put little boats (made out of some biodegradable stuff) containing some more ashes on the water and watched them sail away.

• olls25 lostgirl

10h ago

What a lovely idea!

• EricBallinger

19h ago

Mostly ghoulish tripe given gravitas by being lauded as developing world culture.

The UK needs cemeteries in woodland with no markers and ALL present cemeteries to be emptied to appropriate places and the land put to better use.

• typernotfighter

19h ago

Engaging with the dead was quite strongly discouraged during the Ebola outbreak from what i remember.



THE FRIGHT GALLERY

CURATED BY GARY PULLIN

THIS MONTH: DECK'S DEATHLY DOLLS

Met Hamilton-based illustrator and sculptor Sara Deck, who has been turning heads with her custom crafted Victorian dolls. She's put her unique stamp on versions of Regan from *The Exorcist*, Drusilla and Spike from *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, plus a truly dark vision of Poe's Lenore, as well as custom commissions that result in her creating dead/monstrous avatars of people that she knows – she recently turned one friend into the Bride of Frankenstein, for example.

Deck grew up with a love for dolls – Cabbage Patch Kids, My Little Pony, She-Ra and Barbie, all had a place in her youth. But it was the horror films that her older brother introduced her to, combined with a particular doll house, that inspired her imagination to go in a darker direction.

"I had a mini Victorian doll house that came with tiny furniture and people, which I used to stage scenes in," she recalls. "I still have that house in my basement to this day. I sometimes feel like doll-making really is an extension of playing with dolls as a child. ... [My interest in Victorian dolls] might have something to do with the idea that older things have a rich history and perhaps could be haunted. I personally like the aesthetic of them and I find the time period very inspiring when creating back stories for some of my dolls."

No question, there's something truly sinister lurking within Deck's creations, something that stirs in their glass eyes, polymer clay faces and wire skeletons. She hand-sews her doll's clothing and often dyes the fabric herself to achieve an aged look. (Not surprisingly, Deck traces her aesthetic inspirations to Alan Lee and Brian Froud's puppet work on *Labyrinth* and *Dark Crystal*.)

Deck has also designed posters inspired by genre films and television, including ones for *I Walked With a Zombie*, *White Zombie* and *Twin Peaks*. She explains that, for her, there's an important link between illustrating and sculpting.

"They are both satisfying to me. I have found that sculpting has really tickled my drawing brain a lot. Having to think of features in terms of recreating them in 3D has, in turn, really levelled up my drawing. I would recommend it to other 2D artists looking to enhance their abilities. It's very rewarding."

Given the horror genre's long fascination with creepy dolls, including the recently released *Annabelle*, I wondered if Deck has some particular insight into why we find them so unnerving.

"I think that dolls are scary to people in the same way that masks are scary," she explains. "The frozen expressions hide what's potentially going on underneath."

Deck's dolls go from \$40 to \$500, depending on the size and amount of detail. Visit saradeck.com to see her uncanny little creations. 🧟



Delta Force agent claims they were 'abducted by UFO' in shock complaint to US military

[express.co.uk](http://www.express.co.uk)

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Delta Force agent claims they were 'abducted by UFO' in shock complaint to US military

A SERVING US senior anti-terror special agent sensationally claimed her own commanders sent her insane by poisoning her with uranium and following her with drones, because she knew too much about a friendly fire incident.

By Jon Austin

PUBLISHED: 14:12, Thu, Apr 28, 2016 | UPDATED: 19:25, Thu, Apr 28, 2016



GETTY•YouTube



The woman made the shocking allegations while still a serving commander with Delta Force

The woman even claimed to have been abducted by aliens in a UFO during her ordeal, www.express.co.uk can exclusively reveal.

Details of the Delta Force Afghanistan veteran commander's extraordinary allegations against the military

and US Government emerged after the US Naval Criminal Investigation Service (NCIS) released part-redacted documents following a probe it carried out into the claims of harassment.

The US Delta Force is a US Army unit similar to the UK SAS and used for hostage rescue, including the October 2015 release of 20 prisoners from an Islamic State (ISIS) prison near Hawija in Iraq, counterterrorism, and assassinations or surveillance of high-value targets.

The allegations bears startling similarities to the murder of former Russian spy Alexander Litvinenko, 43, who is believed to have been killed by the KGB on orders of the Kremlin and died from uranium poisoning in London in 2006.

It also resembles plots from US TV CBS series Homeland in which special agent Carrie Mathison played by Clare Danes has suffered a number of mental breakdowns, and Person of Interest whereby subjects of surveillance are followed by cameras.

The woman, whose name has been redacted from the report along with other personal details, made the complaint on September 5 2013 at NCISRA Camp Pendleton in California.

Other allegations were that she was beaten and had emails hacked and deleted, according to the papers obtained by John Greenwald of The Black Vault UFO investigative website.

They received the report after asking the NCIS for all information it held about UFOs and aliens.



GETTY

The woman claimed she was abducted by aliens during her ordeal

The released report said the woman: "Claimed upon her return from a deployment with the US Army Delta Force in Afghanistan she became ill.

"(She) stated she was infected with a nano-partical which was provided to her via food, vaccines, and through the air because she had knowledge of a friendly fire incident wherein a soldier was killed in action.

"(She) stated after an illness caused from (redacted) she was returning home from work in Los Angeles, california, to Burbank, when she noticed she was being followed.

"(She) claimed she was being followed by a US drone or unidentified flying object (UFO)."



GETTY

Alexander Litvinenko was given uranium allegedly by order of the Kremlin

The woman, who rose to the rank of commander and held secret security clearance at the time of her complaints, claimed she photographed the "drone" but did not have them available when she was interviewed by investigators about her complaint.

Investigators reported a series of bizarre experiences she claimed to

have had, which cast question marks over her sanity, after taking up mediation to "calm her ongoing illness and government tracking of her."

These included an out-of-body experience during meditation, when she claimed to ascend into a space craft, meeting an alien called Ashtar who claimed "they war eloping for her," and being burnt on the legs by an "electro-magnetic pulse weapon."

She was then transferred to the Naval Medical Center in Portsmouth, Virginia.

NCIS•BLACKVAULT

She chose to snub a book medical appointment on the day she made the complaint, claiming

she did not need treatment.

But the release of the documents has caused a buzz on conspiracy their websites.

Jack Brewer said in an article on the UFO Trail blog site: "I very much appreciate Greenwald's efforts due to my interest in the activities of NCIS."

He pointed to the book Chameleo: A strange but True Story of Invisible Spies, Heroin Addiction, and Homeland Security by Robert Guffey.

In the book Mr Guffey claimed the NCIS had used interrogation techniques that induced perceptions in the subjects which were like the experiences of so-called alien abductees.

Mr Brewer also points to the 2015 Hoffman report to the American Psychological Association which looked at national security interrogation and torture methods and said the NCIS had used "ethically very marginal" techniques on a "petty officer who was screened for hypnosis."

Express.co.uk has asked the NCIS to comment on the allegations and if the complain ever resurfaced and awaits a response.

2 Comments

ArxFerrum

In this day and age? No telling what goes on.

Trust is something handed out at risk.

none

UFO groupies are DELUDED!!

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Ted Cruz Is 'Honored' To Have The Support Of Colorado's Demon-Hunting, Anti-Gay Exorcist State Legislator Gordon Klingenschmitt

rightwingwatch.org

RIGHT WING WATCH

Submitted by Kyle Mantyla on
Saturday, 4/9/2016
2:51 pm

We have noted several times before that there seems to be no activist who is too extreme to be embraced by Ted Cruz's presidential campaign, so we were not particularly surprised when the Texas senator recently announced that infamous demon-hunting, anti-gay exorcist/state legislator Gordon Klingenschmitt would be part of his Colorado leadership team.

"I am honored to have the support of so many courageous conservatives in Colorado," Cruz said in a press release celebrating the formation of "his Colorado Leadership Team with the endorsement of 25 current and former elected officials and key grassroots leaders," including Klingenschmitt.

Some might recognize Klingenschmitt from a Daily Show segment just last week in which his ignorance and bigotry were on full display, but for those unfamiliar with "Dr. Chaps," as he likes to be called, allow us to fill you in.

Back in 2006, Klingenschmitt was booted out of the Navy for wearing his uniform at a political rally, in violation of military regulations, though he claimed, of course, that he was the victim of anti-Christian persecution (and that God even sent a hurricane as a show of support for him), thus beginning his career as a Religious Right activist.

In 2014, Klingenschmitt won a seat in the Colorado House of Representatives and his tenure in office, unsurprisingly, has been marked by controversy. He was stripped of his seat on the House Health, Insurance and Environment Committee in his first year in office after claiming on his "Pray In Jesus Name" television program that a brutal attack on a pregnant woman in the state was due to the "curse of God upon America" for legal abortion:

He ultimately apologized for his remarks (while portraying himself as the victim) and eventually the controversy blew over enough to allow him to launch a bid for a seat in the state Senate.

Klingenschmitt is a viciously anti-gay theocrat who brags of having once tried to rid a woman of the "foul spirit of lesbianism" through an exorcism and believes that gay people "want your soul" and may sexually abuse their own children, which is why he says that they should face government discrimination since only people who are going to heaven are entitled to equal treatment by the government:

He has declared that judges who strike down gay marriage bans are "imposing the Devil's law upon people" and are deceiving people into hell, warning that these rulings will eventually be overturned by Jesus, who will send all gay people to hell:

Klingenschmitt has declared that the Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy should never have been repealed since gay soldiers cannot serve effectively in combat because they are constantly "taking breaks on the combat field to change diapers all because their treacherous sin causes them to lose control of their bowels." He also proclaims that those who are not welcome in the church should not be entitled to use public restrooms.

Gays, he says, have something inhuman and demonic inside of them which causes them to persecute Christians and which is why he thinks that teaching kids about gay marriage is mental rape and advocates for Christians to print anti-gay Bible verses on the backs of gay people's wedding photos:

Klingenschmitt is a man who wrote a book arguing that President Obama is ruled by multiple "demonic spirits" and once even tried to exorcise the White House, claims that "Obamacare causes cancer," that the Bible commands people to own guns in order to "defend themselves against left wing crazies" and that the FCC is allowing demonic spirits to "molest and visually rape your children":

Klingenschmitt has repeatedly warned that allowing gays to serve in the Boy Scouts will lead to "more homosexual molestation of young boys," that gays need conversion therapy to "get the Devil out" and stated last year that a crane collapse in Mecca that killed over 100 Muslim worshippers was "the consequence of their sin" for "praying to Satan":

And Ted Cruz is so "honored" to have Klingenschmitt's support that he has placed him on his Colorado leadership team.

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In Jewish folklore and popular belief an evil spirit which enters into a living person, cleaves to his soul, causes mental illness, talks through his mouth, and represents a separate and alien personality is called a *dibbuk*. The term appears neither in talmudic literature nor in the Kabbalah, where this phenomenon is always called "evil spirit." (In talmudic literature it is sometimes called *ru'ah tezazit*, and in the New Testament "unclean spirit.") The term was introduced into literature only in the 17th century from the spoken language of German and Polish Jews. It is an abbreviation of *dibbuk me-ru'ah ra'ah* ("a cleavage of an evil spirit"), or *dibbuk min ha-hizonim* ("dibbuk from the outside"), which is found in man. The act of attachment of the spirit to the body became the name of the spirit itself. However, the verb *davok* ("cleave") is found throughout kabbalistic literature where it denotes the relations between the evil spirit and the body, *mitdabbeket bo* ("it cleaves itself to him").

Stories about *dibbukim* are common in the time of the Second Temple and the talmudic periods, particularly in the Gospels; they are not as prominent in medieval literature. At first, the *dibbuk* was considered to be a devil or a demon which entered the body of a sick person. Later, an explanation common among other peoples was added, namely that some of the *dibbukim* are the spirits of dead persons who were not laid to rest and thus became "demons." This idea (also common in medieval Christianity) combined with the doctrine of **gilgul* ("transmigration of the soul") in the 16th century and became widespread and accepted by large segments of the Jewish population, together with the belief in *dibbukim*. They were generally considered to be souls which, on account of the enormity of their sins, were not even allowed to transmigrate and as "denuded spirits" they sought refuge in the bodies of living persons. The entry of a *dibbuk* into a person was a sign of his having committed a secret sin which opened a door for the *dibbuk*. A combination of beliefs current in the non-Jewish environment and popular Jewish beliefs influenced by the Kabbalah form these conceptions. The kabbalistic literature of *Luria's disciples contains many stories and "protocols" about the exorcism of *dibbukim*. Numerous manuscripts present detailed instructions on how to exorcise them. The power to exorcise *dibbukim* was given to *ba'alei shem* or accomplished Hasidim. They exorcised the *dibbuk* from the body which was bound by it and simultaneously redeemed the soul by providing a *tikkun* ("restoration") for him, either by transmigration or by causing the *dibbuk* to enter hell. Moses *Cordovero defined the *dibbuk* as an "evil pregnancy."

From 1560 several detailed reports in Hebrew and Yiddish on the deeds of *dibbukim* and their testimonies about themselves were preserved and published. A wealth of material on actual stories of *dibbukim* is gathered in Samuel *Vital's *Sha'ar ha-Gilgulim*, in Hayyim *Vital's *Sefer ha-Hezyonot*, in *Nishmat Hayyim* by *Manasseh Ben Israel (book 3, chs. 10 and 14), in *Minhat Eliyahu* (chs. 4 and 5) by *Elijah ha-Kohen of Smyrna, and in *Minhat Yehudah* by Judah Moses Fetya of Baghdad (1933, pp. 41–59). The latter exorcised *Shabbetai Zevi and his prophet *Nathan of Gaza who appeared as *dibbukim* in the bodies of men and women in Baghdad in 1903. Special booklets on the exorcisms of famous spirits which took place in Korets have also been published (end of 17th century in Yiddish), in Nikolsburg (1696, 1743), in Detmold (1743), and in Stolowitz (1848). The last protocol of this kind, published in Jerusalem in 1904, concerns a *dibbuk* which entered the body of a woman and was exorcised by Ben-Zion Hazzan. The phenomena connected with the beliefs in and the stories about *dibbukim* usually have their factual background in cases of hysteria and sometimes even in manifestations of schizophrenia.

In the Arts

There are a few significant treatments of the *dibbuk* theme in literature, one of the earliest being a story in the *Ma'aseh Book (1602; Eng. tr. 2 vols., 1934). The classic interpretation of the story is *Der Dibbuk* (1916), a play by S. *An-Ski, which inspired various artistic and musical treatments. An unusual adaptation of the old legend is the French novelist Romain *Gary's bitterly satirical *La Danse de Gengis Cohn* (1967; *The Dance of Genghis Cohn*, 1968), which tells of the haunting of an ex-Nazi by the spirit of

a Jewish entertainer whom he murdered in World War II. In drama and music the *dibbuk* motif has mainly found expression in compositions associated with An-Ski's play, the *Habimah* production of which, in Moscow in 1922, was both visually and dramatically a landmark. It was directed by Eugene Vakhtangov, who gave the play an expressionist interpretation; the stage sets were designed by Nathan Altman, and Jacques Chapiro collaborated in the production. A Yiddish film version of the play was made in Poland in 1938 and a Hebrew version in Israel in 1968.

Joel Engel's music for An-Ski's play, like the play itself, dates from 1912, when the two men heard the old folk-tale from an innkeeper's wife. An-Ski constructed the play on the leitmotiv of the hasidic song *Mipnei mah* ("Why did the soul descend from the supreme height to the deep pit?"). The tune was used at the first performance of the play by the Vilna troupe, and was taken over by Engel. For the rest of the stage music, Engel drew on the folk melodies he had collected, mainly those of hasidic provenance. In 1926 Engel published an arrangement of the stage music as the Suite "*Hadibuk*" (op. 35). Bernhard Sekles wrote an orchestral prelude, *Der Dybuk* (publ. 1929). The opera *Il Dibuk* by Lodovico Rocca (text by Renato Simoni after An-Ski) had its premiere at La Scala, Milan, in 1934. Later settings include a ballet by Max Ettinger (1947), and two operas (both entitled *The Dybbuk*) by U.S. composers – David Tamkin (1951) and Michael Whyte (1962).

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Escaped octopus 'didn't even leave us a message'

radionz.co.nz



6:53 pm on 12 April 2016

A crafty octopus has squeezed through a gap in its enclosure, down a narrow drain and escaped from a Napier aquarium.



Inky the common octopus Photo: Supplied / National Aquarium

Inky the common octopus took advantage of his tank's lid being left slightly ajar and fled to the Pacific Ocean.

Despite happening three months ago, news of the breakout is only emerging now.

National Aquarium manager Rob Yarrall said octopuses were incredible escape artists, and Inky was no exception.

"They can fit through very very small spaces, even quite a large octopus they can squeeze down to the size of their mouth which is the only really hard part of their body it's a beak, very much like a parrot beak."

On the day of Inky's escape, maintenance work was being done and the lid to the octopus' tank had been left slightly open.

Mr Yarrall said Inky slipped out of his enclosure and across the floor to a drain hole 150 mm in diameter, used for taking water back to the ocean.

"He managed to make his way to one of the drain holes which go back to the ocean and off he went - and he didn't even leave us a message."

He said the next day staff found his trail and checked the pipework which Inky had climbed down - but he was already gone.

Mr Yarrall said Inky had been with the aquarium since 2014 and was a very popular with the aquarium staff as well as the public.

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Dinosaur at New Jersey theme park catches fire

upi.com



By Daniel Uria | May 12, 2016 at 4:24 PM

Report of a dinosaur on fire today. That was definitely a first for us. Sadly the dinosaur did not survive. pic.twitter.com/xKyPfurvXo

— Leonia Police Dept (@LeoniaPD) May 12, 2016

LEONIA, N.J., May 12 (UPI) -- Police in Bergen County, N.J., responded to calls about a burning dinosaur at a local theme park.

Leonia police shared a photo of the attraction at Field Station Dinosaur Park, which was reduced to its metal skeleton after being engulfed by flames.

"Report of a dinosaur on fire today. That was definitely a first for us," the police department wrote. "Sadly the dinosaur did not survive."

According to PIX 11, the fire occurred at Field Station Dinosaur Park's new location on Fort Lee Road, which was set to open in two weeks.

It is unclear what caused the fire, but the surrounding dinosaurs were unaffected, police pointed out.

"These dinosaurs survived, however they refused to give a witness statement," Leonia police wrote on Twitter.

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Divine Surprise: Evansville mom shares holy ultrasound picture

EVANSVILLE, IN (WFIE) -

14news.com



An Evansville woman was in for a divine surprise after a prenatal checkup at her doctor's office.

Aley Meyer's ultrasound picture of her baby boy appears to show an image of Jesus on the cross. Aley told 14 News that she didn't even notice until about a week later when someone pointed it out at her baby shower.

(Aley Meyer's baby photo sent to WFIE)

"We took a picture of it and blew it up on my phone to get a closer look and it is so much detail. You can see the hair and his legs crossed and everything," said Meyer.

In just a few hours, the picture spread like wildfire on Facebook.

"My mom shared it and she got 50 comments," Meyer said. "People are asking for permission to share it."

While Aley is getting a kick out of the interest in the picture, she also likes to think the image is a subtle message from above.

"I've been on a lot of medicine for my Chron's Disease and I've been very worried about it so I feel like it's a sign that everything's going to be ok with him," Meyer said.

Aley said her grandmother even bought her a crucifix recently for the baby which she plans to hang in the nursery. Baby Easton is due in June.

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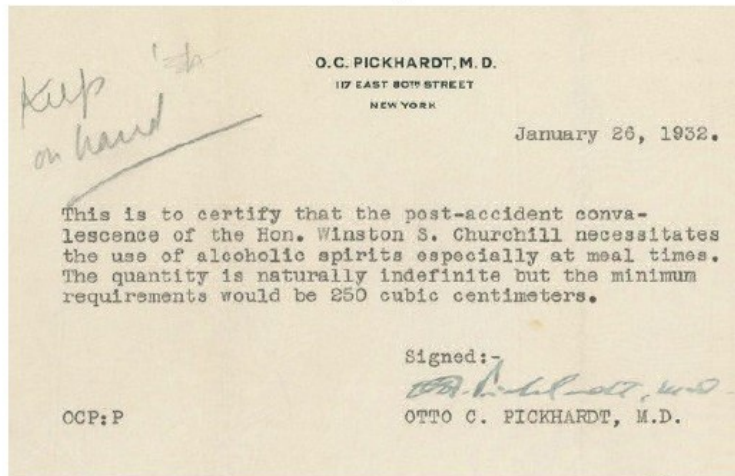
Winston Churchill Gets a Doctor's Note to Drink "Unlimited" Alcohol in Prohibition America (1932)

in Food & Drink, Health, History, Politics | May 6th, 2016 [Leave a Comment](#)

openculture.com



In December 1931, having just embarked on a 40-stop lecture tour of the United States, Winston



churchill alcohol letter

Churchill was running late to dine with financier Bernard Baruch on New York City's Upper East Side. He hadn't bothered to bring Baruch's address, operating under the incorrect assumption that his friend was so distinguished a personage, any random cab-driving commoner would automatically recognize his building.

Such were the days before cell phones and Google Maps....

Eventually, Churchill bagged the cab, and shot out across 5th Avenue mid-block, thinking he would fare better on foot.

Instead, he was very nearly "squashed like a gooseberry" when he was struck by a car traveling about 35 miles an hour.

Churchill, who wasted no time peddling his memories of the accident and subsequent hospitalization to *The Daily Mail*, explained his miscalculation thusly:

In England we frequently cross roads along which fast traffic is moving in both directions. I did not think the task I set myself now either difficult or rash. But at this moment habit played me a deadly trick. I no sooner got out of the cab somewhere about the middle of the road and told the driver to wait than I instinctively turned my eyes to the left. About 200 yards away were the yellow headlights of an approaching car. I thought I had just time to cross the road before it arrived; and I started to do so in the prepossession—wholly unwarranted—that my only dangers were from the left.

Yeah, well, that's why we paint the word "LOOK" in the crosswalk, pal, equipping the Os with left-leaning pupils for good measure.

Another cab ferried the wounded Churchill to Lenox Hill Hospital, where he identified himself as "Winston Churchill, a British Statesman" and was treated for a deep gash to the head, a fractured nose, fractured ribs, and severe shock.

"I do not wish to be hurt any more. Give me chloroform or something," he directed, while

waiting for the anesthetist.

After two weeks in the hospital, where he managed to develop pleurisy in addition to his injuries, Churchill and his family repaired to the Bahamas for some R&R.

It didn't take long to feel the financial pinch of all those cancelled lecture dates, however. Six weeks after the accident, he resumed an abbreviated but still grueling 14-stop version of the tour, despite his fears that he would prove unfit.

Otto Pickhardt, Lenox Hill's admitting physician came to the rescue by issuing Churchill the Get Out of Prohibition Free Pass, above. To wit:

...the post-accident convalescence of the Hon. Winston S. Churchill necessitates the use of alcoholic spirits especially at meal times. The quantity is naturally indefinite but the minimum requirements would be 250 cubic centimeters.

Perhaps this is what the eminent British Statesman meant by chloroform "or something"? No doubt he was relieved about those indefinite quantities. Cheers.

Read Churchill's "My New York Misadventure" in its entirety here. You can also learn more by perusing this section of Martin Gilbert's biography, *Winston Churchill: The Wilderness Years*.

Ayun Halliday is an author, illustrator, and Chief Primatologist of the East Village Inky zine. She lives in New York City, some 30 blocks to the north of the scene of Churchill's accident. Follow her @AyunHalliday

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Doctors baffled as brothers are healthy during the day but become paralyzed every night



Indelible Bonobo @InBonobo · May 10

Pakistani children Abdul Rasheed, 9, left, and Shoaib Ahmed, 13, have become known as the "solar...



Inbonobo

Pakistani children Abdul Rasheed, 9, left, and Shoaib Ahmed, 13, have become known as the "solar kids," who become paralyzed at night. Thei...
inbonobo.tumblr.com

Abdul Rasheed and Shoaib Ahmed

By: Wayne Morin

(Scroll down for video) Doctors are trying figure out what causes two brothers to become paralyzed every night.

During the day, 9-year-old Abdul Rasheed and Shoaib Ahmed, 13, both of Pakistan, are like all the other children. They laugh and play together.

However, as soon as the sun sets, they collapse into a vegetative state. They are completely paralyzed and unable to speak.

The children were nicknamed "the solar kids" as their parents believe that they get their energy from the sun.

The case has baffled doctors who have no idea what is causing the symptoms.

The children's father Mohammad Hashim, married his cousin. They had six children, but two of the kids died at an early age.

Hashim said that his two other children have no medical conditions and are perfectly healthy.

Dr. Javed Akram, a professor at The Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences, agreed to treat the children.

Doctors are doing medical tests to determine why these children remain active during the day, but cannot open their eyes and cannot speak or eat when the sun sets.

Dr. Akram said that the government is paying for the medical care of the brothers who come from a poor family.

The treatments include sending blood samples to specialists abroad for further examination, Akram said. Researchers are also collecting samples of soil from the village where the family lives for testing.

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And Down Will Come Baby, Basket and All... - Haunted Ohio Books

hauntedohiobooks.com

This is the official website of the 7-volume Haunted Ohio series and the Ghosts of the Past series by Ohio author Chris Woodyard

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Rock-a-by, Baby, in the tree-top... When the bough breaks, the cradle will fall.

When I was writing *Haunted Ohio III*, I spoke with a young woman in Columbus, Ohio, who told me how she had been disturbed by a ghostly crying baby, and of the ingenious way she found to soothe the little spirit.

She was fortunate to be able to hush the dead. The lore of apparitions is filled with wailing infant ghosts, Unloved, unwanted, and buried in unsanctified soil, they sob, unseen and inconsolable.

In 1873 travelers in the Welsh Mountains of Pennsylvania were disturbed by what sounded like the cries of a tormented infant. But this infant was not unseen: It was a child in a basket on a tree-top.

And down would come baby, basket and all...

A Ghost in the Form of a Baby

We have something on the summit of the Welsh Mountain, midway between Morgantown and Waynesburg, and about one-fourth a mile from the main road. For the past two weeks the cries of a child could be heard by persons passing along the road, and on a Sunday night as Robert Gorman, residing north of Downingtown, in company with another gentleman and two ladies, were passing the point, the cries became heart-rending, and they thought someone was treating a child shamefully. After walking a short distance one of the ladies, a Miss Ellie Parker, who resides near Paoli, stopped suddenly, and told the party to look up at the top of a large tree just in front of them, and there was seen a baby seated in a small basket, swinging back and forth, with but faint cries.

The ladies became frightened at the sight and begged one of the gentlemen to try and get up the tree and bring the child down. The distance up to the first limb was some twenty feet, and the gentlemen found it was impossible to get up. While the conversation was going on as to how the child could be brought down the child gave one scream, and as if by magic the basket fell half the distance to the ground, causing the ladies to scream, and the entire party to be more or less frightened. In less time than it takes to write this the basket and its contents were back to their place again, the child crying all the time.

This movement struck terror into the party. They watched the movement of the basket, and saw the baby plainly for five minutes afterward, and all at once the basket and its contents disappeared. The ladies state that the child was alive, for they saw it move when it fell down toward them.

On Monday evening a party numbering some twenty repaired to the place, and all saw the same thing. Mr. S. J. Peters, residing south of Lancaster City, was one of the party on Monday night, and he says he saw the baby in the basket, saw it move, and saw the falling and the disappearing. *Reading Eagle*

Lewistown [PA] Gazette 8 September 1875: p. 1

I didn't really know what to make of this story, which seems to suggest that the apparition was on some kind of visionary tape-loop, replaying the basket's fall over and over. I thought it might possibly be related to those repetitious ghosts who are said to walk on the anniversary of some tragedy, but on a tighter schedule. This story caused a sensation—even making it as far as *The New York Times*.

But after the story above was published in *The Ghost Wore Black: Ghastly Tales from the Past*, I found this deflating follow-up piece:

The Reading Baby Ghost a Fraud

From the *Reading Eagle*

The great mystery of the baby in the basket in the Welsh Mountain is at last solved. From the time that the account appeared in the *Eagle* at least three hundred persons visited the place in the mountain to behold the wonderful baby and its movements. On the last night it appeared a party of ladies and gentlemen, consisting of eight ladies and ten gentlemen, came from near West Chester in carriages, with the full determination of ascertaining all about the affair. They had with them ropes and a ladder to ascend the tree, but when they beheld the baby near the top of the tree, and the baby in it, they were fully determined to ascend and bring the little one down, and when the ladder had been put against the tree, and two of the men were going up, the basket with the baby gave its celebrated drop act, which chilled every one in the party, and when it returned to its position, and disappeared altogether, they became almost bewildered and returned to their homes without accomplishing what they had started out for.

Mr. Joseph Broadbent, Mr. Amos Runk, the Gable brothers, and many of the farmers in the neighbourhood, who are well acquainted with the locality and its residents, assert that there is a young lady residing near the place, and that she is an excellent ventriloquist, and had, with the aid of some companions, a basket arranged, and a large rag baby made and placed in the basket, and the whole was worked from a secluded place by a wire. When the basket would disappear it was pulled to the place where the lady and her companions were concealed and taken away. We are willing to acknowledge that we were badly sold.

The Sun [New York, NY] 9 September 1875: p. 2

Well, that is certainly an ingenious little scheme! I have to say that I am more than usually skeptical about nineteenth-century stories of the paranormal miraculously explained by a hidden ventriloquist. It is too much like the "and then I woke up" story ending. Why not name the lady and her companions? And what, precisely, was the point? It seems an overly complicated practical joke, if, in fact, it was a prank.

Digging a little deeper, I found more puzzlement, which probably could be solved with some local knowledge. It was reported that there was a gang of thieves operating in the area, as this article claims, since the 18th century, and as this next article says, "for years."

In the northwest portion of Chester county, adjoining Lancaster and Berks counties, there is a very rugged strip of country known as the Welsh Mountains. For years that place has been the safe retreat of a set of land pirates known as the "Welsh Mountain Gang." It was a thoroughly organized body, including members in all classes of the community from the very scum to the wealthy farmer. They preyed upon their neighbors and committed every crime short of murder. Matters had grown so bad that an organization was perfected to ferret out and break up the practice of the gang, and last week the labors of this association were rewarded by the capture of J. Lewis Robinson, a wealthy farmer, in whose possession was found a whiffletree belonging to a member of the detective society. An examination revealed the fact that Robinson's house must have been a kind of headquarters at which to deposit the booty or else he was captain of the gang, and what was found was his share of the plunder, such as horse collars, double-trees, shovels, spades, stove pipes, clocks, crockery and glassware, silk and other dress goods already made up, shawls, scarfs, bedding and sheets, lap robes, afghans, blankets; in fact every imaginable thing for the use of man, woman or beast. The result of this capture will no doubt lead to breaking up this band of thieves that have so long annoyed the citizens of the above neighborhood.

The New Bloomfield [PA] Times 27 April 1880: p. 4

Does this have anything to do with the baby? Was the apparition something to lure people into a trap so they could be robbed like the Crying Baby Kidnap Lure celebrated in folklore as used by serial killers in parking lots and at front doors everywhere? Or is that an equally tortured explanation?

Given the place name, you will not be surprised to learn that this part of Pennsylvania was settled by the Welsh. It runs in my mind that there is some sort of murderous evil spirit in the British Isles that lures travelers with the sound of a crying baby. It is only heard, rather than seen. If there is such an entity, its name escapes me. Or am I thinking of the 1973 Greensburg, Pennsylvania UFO case where the witness said the alien creatures made a noise like a crying baby or the Greensburg Bigfoot flap of 2003 where the same noise was reported?

Thoughts? Throw your voice to Chriswoodyard8 AT gmail.com

Posted by

Chris Woodyard

on April 12, 2016 in Ephemera, Fairies and Elemental Spirits, Folklore, Fortean Mysteries, Ghosts, News, Victorian, Wonders and Curiosities and tagged And Down Will Come Baby, Baby, baby ghost, Basket and All..., child ghost, criminal gangs, disappearing baby, In the Tree Top, Pennsylvania ghosts, Rock-a-bye, ventriloquism, Welsh Mountain Gang, Welsh Mountains Pennsylvania

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Drunk and strutting their stuff

stuff.co.nz

stuff.co.nz Drunk roosters captured in Westport

JOANNE CARROLL

Last updated 15:54, May 17 2016



Supplied One of the 13 roosters running loose in Westport domain

A band of rogue rambling roosters drunk on whiskey has been captured in Westport.

Irate neighbours reported the noisy roosters who had been dumped in Westport Domain to Buller District Council's animal control officers.

"Thirteen of these fine-feathered gorgeous looking

roosters were strutting their stuff in the domain," said Buller mayor Garry Howard.

"Three renegade roosters took a liking to a magnolia tree across from the domain in a residential area and our animal control staff were forced to climb the tree but it hasn't worked, the roosters are just going higher."

He said their noise was disturbing neighbours early in the morning.

They then set a cage at the bottom of the magnolia tree but it was stolen.

"Some homeless Aucklander thought it would be good to steal that to solve the housing crisis and I'm sure it's now in Parnell somewhere," Howard said.

The council staff then searched the internet for ways to catch the nuisance birds.

"We asked Mr Google about how to catch roosters and he came up with the idea to give them a bit of whiskey. Our animal control officer sacrificed some of his own finest Kentucky whiskey and we have laced some barley with it and we are getting results," he said.

The roosters were getting very drunk and rolling onto their sides, allowing the officers to pick them up.

"Some of them are going to a heavenly home but others have been re-homed in a more rural area. We have one remaining rebel rooster getting a liking for Kentucky whiskey but I am confident we will catch him," the mayor said.

He asked Westport residents to either stop getting excess roosters or find more appropriate homes for them than the domain.

"People don't want to knock them on the head. They are the most beautiful birds in terms of colour and plumage," he said.

- Stuff

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M McNALTY

EDWARD McNALTY

1857—

HIS WIFE

ROSETTA E. McNALTY

1851—1930

Dutch 'horror dentist' sent to jail for eight years in France

April 26, 2016

yahoo.com

PARIS (Reuters) - A Dutchman dubbed the 'horror dentist' by French media was sentenced to eight years in jail on Tuesday for mutilating patients' mouths and defrauding social security services.

The verdict was delivered by a court in Nevers, in central France, where local media relayed gory tales, some from old-aged pensioners who spoke of having as many as eight teeth pulled out in one sitting, infections and bills of tens of thousands of euros.

"This is a massive relief. We must be very careful from now on when we get practitioners from abroad," said Nicole Martin, the head of a group of patients who took legal action against Mark Van Nierop, who had fled to Canada but was extradited back to France.

(Reporting By Brian Love; Editing by Ingrid Melander)

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Dybbuk

Encyclopedia Mythica™

by Ilil Arbel, Ph.D.

The transmigration of souls, or reincarnation, is not part of mainstream Judaism. In the Bible, there is no emphasis on the afterlife, but references to the spirits of the dead do exist. For example, King Saul goes to the Witch of Endor to communicate with the spirit of his mentor, the prophet Samuel. However, the spirits reside in a place of their own, and do not enter other bodies in any shape or form.

The Talmud refers to the spirits of the dead and to exorcism, but again the concept of transmigration is not stressed. The earliest versions are traced to various non-Jewish sources, including Greek, Indian, Gnostic, Christian, and the Islamic Mutazila sect. The concept entered Judaism in earnest only during the 8th century.

Medieval Jewish scholars objected to it, believing (as many continue to believe today) that any type of mysticism is extremely dangerous, and can influence and contaminate not only one's pure religious faith, but his or her very life. There is some truth to that; cults, with their brain-washing techniques, are a good example of how mysticism can deteriorate. Nevertheless the concept of transmigration developed and found serious followers, and by the 12th century it became an established part of the Kabbalah. The 16th century schools of mysticism embraced it, including the Safed circle headed by Isaac Luria. When Hasidism developed, the belief took final hold. There is a vast body of Jewish literature that dwells on the transmigration of souls, and it spans the centuries mentioned above. In this entire body of myth and legend, which includes books, folktales, and plays, the souls described can be roughly divided into three forms, depending on each soul's origin and intent.

The first form is the *Gilgul*, which is the Hebrew word for "rolling," but means, in this context, the transmigration of the soul. Generally, it is represented as a natural sequence in the life of the soul, who must occupy various bodies to learn the many lessons it needs before it can be free to reunite with God. The soul simply enters the body at birth (**not** at conception), just as the infant is about to leave the mother's body, and prepares to live whatever normal life span has been allotted to it.

Special situations require a different approach to transmigration. The second form of transmigration is the *Dybbuk*, a disembodied spirit possessing a living body that belongs to another soul. There are various origins attributed to these spirits. The earliest description usually hinted that they may be nonhuman demons. Later it was assumed they were the spirits of persons who have died. The dybbuk may be the soul of a sinner, who wishes to escape the just punishment meted to it by the angels of the grave (see the article Afterlife) who seek to beat them, or to avoid another form of soul punishment, which is wandering the earth. A dybbuk may seek revenge for some evil that was done to it while it lived. Alternatively, it may be lost, and will enter a body simply to seek a rabbi who would be able to help it and send it on its way. The living person may or may not know that a dybbuk is occupying his or her body, or it may be tormented by it. This depends on the intent of the

possessing soul.

The third form is the *Ibbur*. The literal translation of the word from Hebrew means "impregnation." Ibbur is the most positive form of possession, and the most complicated. It happens when a righteous soul decides to occupy a living person's body for a time, and joins, or spiritually "impregnates" the existing soul. Ibbur is always temporary, and the living person may or may not know that it has taken place. Often the living person has graciously given consent for the Ibbur. The reason for Ibbur is always benevolent -- the departed soul wishes to complete an important task, to fulfil a promise, or to perform a *Mitzva* (a religious duty) that can only be accomplished in the flesh.

Article "Dybbuk" created on 22 April 2002; last modified on 22 April 2002 (Revision 1). 678 words.

<http://www.pantheon.org/articles/d/dybbuk.html>

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Seekonk school officials: Students ingesting seeds to get high

whdh.com

**Seekonk school officials: Students ingesting seeds to get high***Posted: May 04, 2016 3:42 AM PDT Updated: May 04, 2016 7:25 PM PDT*

Reported by Kimberly Bookman

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School officials in Seekonk are warning parents about a dangerous trend involving certain plant seeds.

According to a memo from the Seekonk school superintendent, students are eating the seeds because they give them a high. The memo said the seeds contain a chemical that gives off a high resembling LSD, causing hallucinations, nausea and vomiting.

Some of the seeds in question are Sleepy Grass, Hawaiian Baby Woodrows and Blue Morning Glory. Police said a student in Somerset got sick and had to be hospitalized after ingesting the seeds a couple of weeks ago.

A worker at a local garden store said he saw this back in 2009.

A Home Depot in Somerset has reportedly stopped selling the seeds. School officials warn parents that they may still be sold at other stores.

Seekonk Public Schools posted this statement on their website Wednesday:

In response to the number of inquiries that I have received regarding the ingestion of flower seeds in our schools, I would like to provide a clear accounting of the situation so that

information is shared in an accurate manner.

The issues of seed ingestion came to my attention last week when I was informed that students in a neighboring school district required hospitalization following the ingestion of plant seeds. It is my understanding that the seeds, Sleepy Grass, Hawaiian Baby Woodrose, and Blue Morning

Glory, were being sold locally.

If you conduct a quick internet search, you will note that this is not a new phenomenon. In fact, the ingestion of such seeds goes back to the 60's when kids were trying to replicate the effects of LSD. It is not uncommon to see old trends re-emerge. The information is readily available.

The district works closely with our police department, particularly with our School Resource Officer. We are vigilant, proactive, and responsive so that a one-time incident does not become a larger problem. Ultimately, our goal is to make sure that we are not only well-informed, but that we are pre-emptive in our maintenance of student safety. This includes notifying staff, students, parents, and members of the community.

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Oldest Depiction of Ancient Egyptian Demons Found : DNews discovery.com

Apr 19, 2016 02:03 PM ET // by Rossella Lorenzi



The demon Ikenty represented as a large bird with a black feline head on a Middle Kingdom coffin. The same demon appears as a large bird on a much older leather roll.

Wael Sherbiny

A Belgium-based Egyptologist has discovered the oldest depictions of ancient Egyptian demons, showing that demonic entities populated the ancient Egyptians' imaginations as far

back as 4,000 years ago.

Presented recently at the International Conference on Ancient Egyptian Demonology at Swansea University, U.K., these demons gripped their victims and cut off their heads.

Wael Sherbiny, an independent scholar who specializes in the ancient Egyptian religious texts, found two demons on two Middle Kingdom coffins about 4,000 years old.

The third was portrayed in a 4,000-year-old leather roll the researcher had previously discovered in the shelves of the Egyptian museum in Cairo, where it was stored and forgotten for more than 70 years. It was the oldest and longest Egyptian leather manuscript.

"These three demons are already familiar to scholars from ancient texts. However, the depiction of two of them was unknown until now," Sherbiny told Discovery News.

"The drawings show them in either a purely zoomorphic or anthropomorphic representation," he added.

Two demons, called In-tep, pictured as a dog-like baboon, and Chery-benut, depicted as unspecified figure with human head, appear as guardians at the entrance of a complex building, possibly a kind of temple, that contains several chambers guarded by other demonic entities.

"The texts link this building to the moon god Thoth and the bark of the sun god," Sherbiny said.

He noted that apart from their names, no accompanying textual elements refer to the tasks of these two demons.

"The name of the first demon, In-tep, may denote his dangerous role in severing heads as a punishment to any intruder of the sacred space," Sherbiny said.

The third demon, Ikenty, was the guardian of a fiery gate that led to a restricted area concealing a divine image. The demon's appearance was already known as it was portrayed on a Middle Kingdom coffin (1870-1830 BC) in the form of a large bird with a black feline head.

Sherbiny discovered the same demon in a slightly different, but highly intriguing form in the much older Cairo leather roll, basically finding the oldest image of Ikenty.

"The texts indicate that this demon has a swift attack with inescapably powerful grip on whomever he sees," Sherbiny said.

The ancient Egyptian world of belief was inhabited by a huge number of entities with super powers. They could play both malevolent or benevolent roles, as threats, maladies and dangers, or as protectors, helpers and defenders.

"They turn up in variety of contexts that touch upon different spheres of human life and after life," Sherbiny said.

In-tep, Chery-benut and Ikenty revealed that the elaborate and polychrome drawings of entities from the New Kingdom (about 3,500 years ago) onwards have much older roots than previously thought.

Sherbiny will publish the images of the demons in a forthcoming, extensive study which includes an integral analysis of the contexts in which the demons appear.

"Unfortunately little has survived, and the examples I discovered represent a rare opportunity to witness how the ancient Egyptians imagined the invisible," Sherbiny said.

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Where did the right whales go? New study dives into mystery

2016/05/17

cbc.ca



Scientists from the U.S. and Canada will take part in an unprecedented survey of marine mammals

By Paul Withers, CBC News Posted: May 17, 2016 7:20 AM

AT Last Updated: May 17, 2016 7:20 AM AT



There are only 500 right whales left. (CBC)

Paul Withers Reporter

Paul Withers is an award-winning journalist whose career started in the 1970s as a cartoonist. He has been covering Nova Scotia politics for more than 20 years.

(Note: CBC does not endorse and is not responsible for the content of external links.)

Scientists from the United States and Canada will take part in an unprecedented survey of marine mammals off Atlantic Canada this year.

A big part of that effort will be trying to solve a mystery surrounding the endangered northern right whale. There are only 500 right whales left and their migratory patterns have recently shifted, leaving scientists wondering where the whales have gone.

"When you are dealing with a population of 500 animals that is slow to reproduce this is a cause for significant concern," said Sean Brilliant of the Canadian Wildlife Federation.

'Shock and surprise'

Brilliant is impressed by the upcoming effort to solve the mystery.

"There's a full court press. We have aerial surveys, on the water and in the water with autonomous underwater drones, listening," he said.

• **Species at risk': Ottawa strengthens protections for beluga whales in St. Lawrence Estuary**

In 2015, very few were seen in their traditional summer feeding grounds near New Brunswick's Grand Manan Island in the Bay of Fundy and the Roseway Basin off southern Nova Scotia.

"This caused a lot of shock and surprise," Brillant said. "People want to know where did they go. We have the Americans asking where are the whales? They are in your waters."

It's believed the behemoths are chasing food, specifically a variety of zooplankton called copepods. Several dozen right whales were spotted off the tip of Gaspé, Que., in 2015. American scientists from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration will be up in the air over the Gulf of St Lawrence in 2016.

There's an app for that

Citizen scientists who want to help track whale movements can do so with the Whale Alert App, which can be used on any mobile device.

The app allows users to send photos and data in real time where there is cellphone coverage.

It also provides updates on where right whales have been spotted.

The app started in the U.S. where it is used around the shipping lanes near the Port of Boston.

Most effort ever

On Monday, researchers from Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Dalhousie University took part in a workshop at the offices of marine acoustics company Jasco Applied Sciences in Dartmouth, N.S.

The workshop was to understand and coordinate the whale call data they will gather this summer.

Kim Davies, a marine biologist at Dalhousie, said the survey is unprecedented.

Serendipitous survey

"This is going to be the most effort, most coordinated effort for marine mammal surveys that's ever been undertaken in Atlantic Canada," said Davies.

She said it is also serendipity. Surveys planned long ago are coming on stream this year, just as the right whale mystery deepened.

"This year is different than any other year we've seen in terms of effort. Some of that is focused on the right whale because of the abandonment. Some of it is because we just want to know more about marine mammals across Atlantic Canada."

Davies is optimistic the whales will be found.

'Every year we know less and less'

Jasco's science director Bruce Martin is hopeful, while also appreciating how elusive the whales can be.

His company manufactures fixed and floating listening devices that record whale calls. Nearly two dozen are positioned off the Atlantic coast.

"I've been following the right whale for about four years now ... and every year we know less and less about what's going on," said Martin.

He said the search for whale food is part of the solution.

"It's a really interesting problem to figure out where are they going. We know they are following food, that's what Kim studies, but we don't know where that food is. So we have to range broadly."

Habitat protection order

On May 14, the federal government issued a critical habitat protection order for the endangered right whale's key territory near Grand Manan and the Roseway Basin. The measure enshrines protections already in place, but was welcomed.

Davies said the order has been sitting on the desk of the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans since 2010.

Brilliant said the order is another sign the new Liberal government is taking environmental issues more seriously than their Conservative predecessors.

Also on May 14, Ottawa issued a critical habitat protection for beluga whales in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

CBC

Radio-Canada

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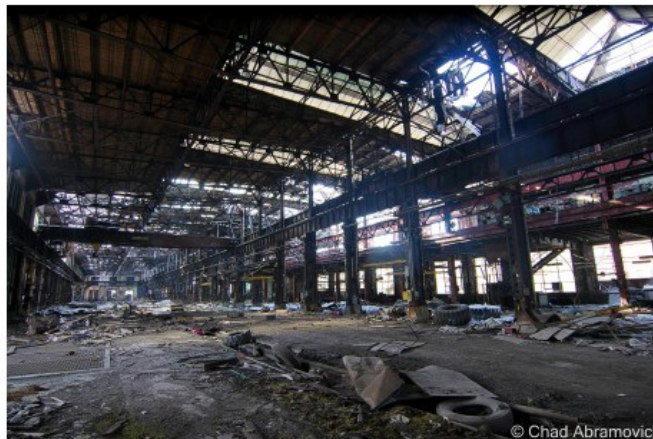
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Posted on February 9, 2016 By Chad Abramovich



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“Wow, how does a place like this even exist?” mulled my friend aloud, lost in her own

luminous reverie. I had seen photos of this beautiful dereliction online, but I was just as awed, as the stagnant cold inside stung my hands.

The early morning wintry cold was still hanging over the misty hills of Bolton flats in a hundred shades of blue as we departed for southern New England. While we drove we sat in silence, with heated seats, coffee and the wonderful sounds of Caspian coming through my iPod. After a few hours, Vermont's brown frozen hills gave way to eight lanes of interstate traffic and lots of Dunkin Donuts signs.

Thirty-two years of fluctuating New England weather and zero upkeep had rotted out the drafty interior. The metal stairwells became stretches of rusty spiderwebs, some were completely untrustworthy. The snow that fell through between broken roof was so loud that you would have thought it was thundering outside. The thick brick walls oozing with slime and glazed by ice blocked cell phone reception pretty well. I received a few texts sent by my friend asking me where I was, hours after she had sent them and on the road back to Vermont, which I guess meant that contact in case of emergencies would have been pretty unaccommodating.

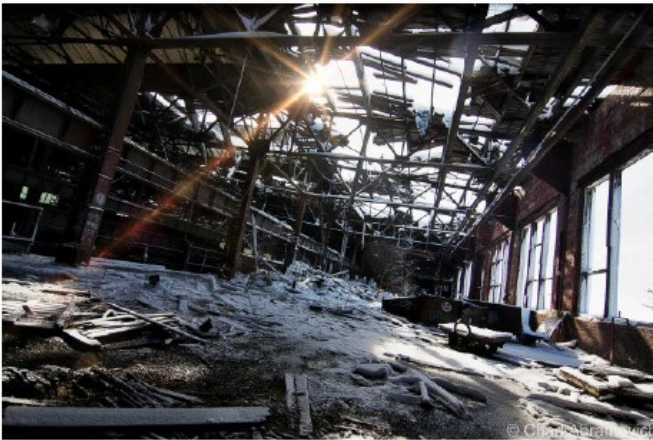
The complex appeared to be a utilitarian and symmetrical layout of two large spaces adjoined by a central row of offices, bathrooms and mechanical areas. But upon closer and intimate inspection, I was actually more and more surprised at just how many rooms and levels there were, packed in by a labyrinth of confusing staircases and elevated runways. Some spaces were more or less original to their inaugural construction at the turn of the last century, and in the throes of the shifty ways of time, more were accommodated. There were quite a few dank 1970s office spaces put up hastily in areas that contained the infamous giveaway vinyl wall paneling and drop down ceilings, all which were accordion-ing now thanks to precipitous moisture. Some spaces were utterly unidentifiable under the entropy, with collapsing floors and sketchy staircases that lead into ambiguous soggy blackness above. But it was the two main rectangular chambers and their brawniness of broken glass and steel that I was interested in. These cavernous spaces had quite the compendium of artifacts left behind; from magnificent and remarkably intact machinery, actual steel rails still embedded in the floors, to just about anything you can fathom that had somehow found its way inside and subsequently left there to waste away. There's a lot for a person to think about as they walk along the crumbling floors inside this illusion of another world. Just watch out for nails. There are plenty to step on.



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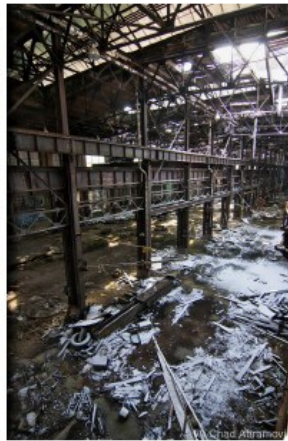
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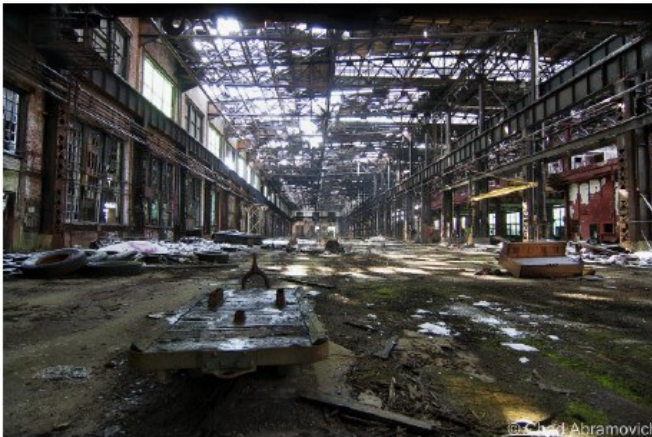
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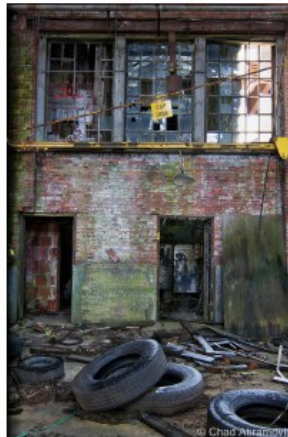
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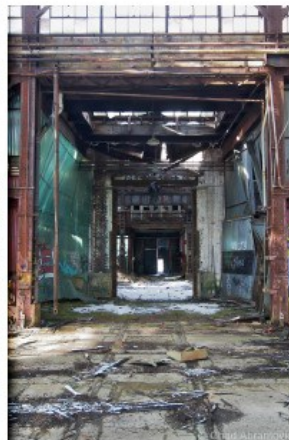
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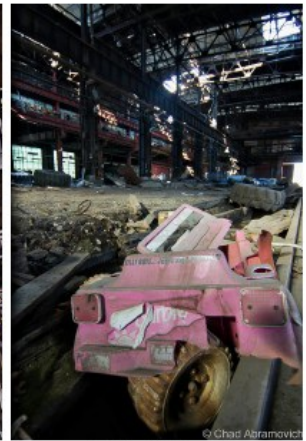
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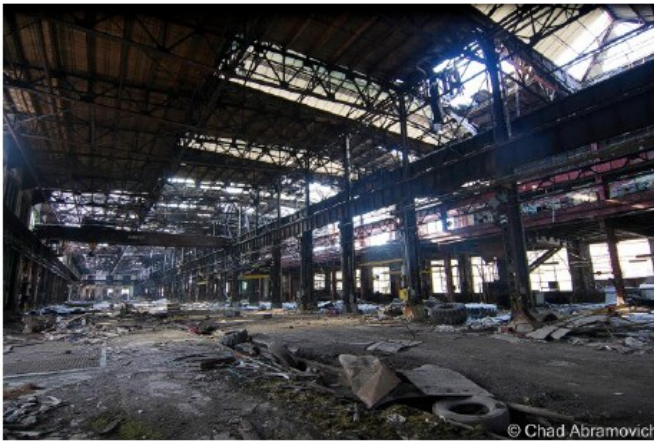
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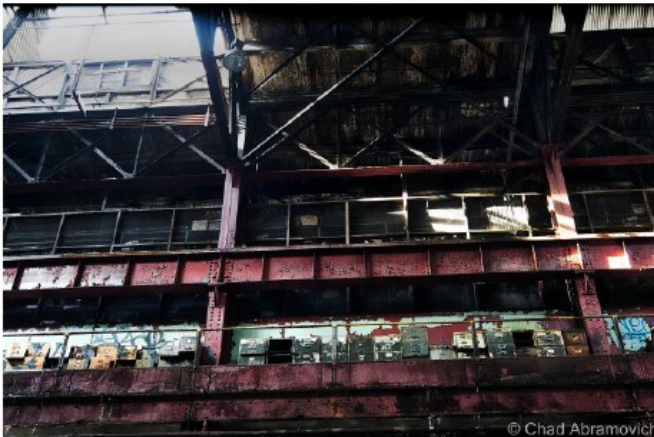
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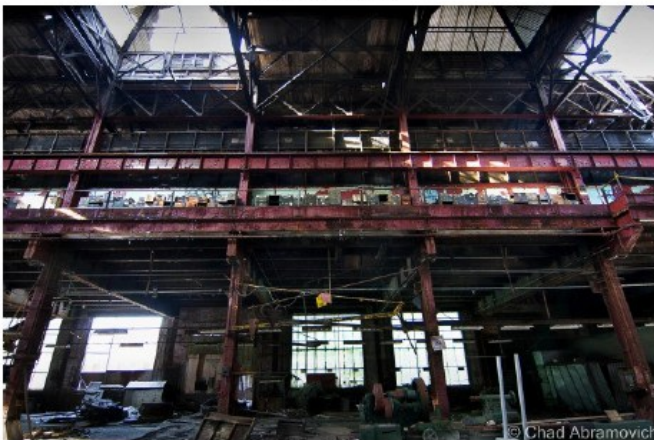
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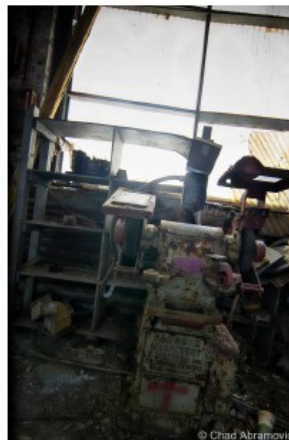
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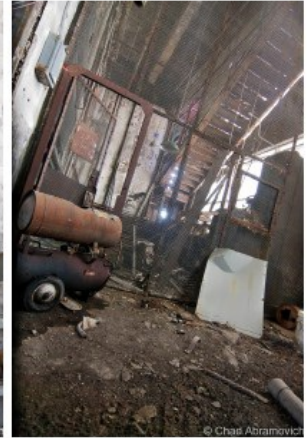
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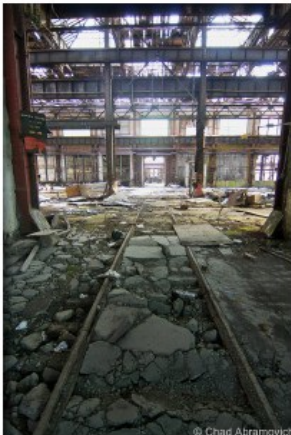
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The most interesting of things left to rediscover was the extraordinary amounts of sordid books, paperwork and filing cabinet miscellany (and their accompanying filing cabinets) that had been left behind. I'm talking entire floors filled with wall to collapsing wall of old records mummified in decay. Most of the paperwork was illegible, but the oldest date I was able to find was 1931. Another friend and explorer had joked that a photo of mine was the literal embodiment of "squishy", but as of now, no destination has been able to surpass The Pines Hotel as my "squishy-est" explore, though this place is definitely a contender.

Though we live in a world that has largely been explored, mapped and reclaimed, these human made spaces become utterly fascinating after their functionality ceases to exist. The mystery continuum of their inner spaces become sort of last frontiers, as nature begins to reclaim everything that has been forsaken by us, transforming these spaces into something incredible. It's on these explores that I like to attempt a little amateur forensic archaeology, and try to pick at the bones.

The suburban New England town I traveled too became a the chosen plot of land for the formerly prestigious Boston & Maine Railroad to build their rail yards and repair/manufacture shops in 1913. What is considered to be one of American's oldest suburbs was built up in the adjacent area to accommodate the growing need for laborers, many of the garden enhanced neighborhoods eventually were built up over old track beds that were once spur lines leading back towards the roundhouse, depot and loading docks. The continuously shape shifting property grew to massive scales as the railroad industry became a future facing wonder, as growing mill towns and their populations created a ravenous market. That is, until the automobile became *de rigueur*.

The popularization of the automobile and the trucking industry seems to be the harbinger of death for a good amount of the ruins I visit, and this seemed to follow the same story line, as both the automobile and leveling of the same manufacturing that created the demands for the railroad, murdered it. The railroad had grown so much during it's boom years, that it went into unpayable debt for the miles of tracks they laid and smaller companies they acquired in the throes of good natured greedy competition. Towards the latter half of the 20th century, the railroad industry indignantly stepped back into a darker corner of civic and popular culture, and the massive campus was now useless.

The B&M went bankrupt in 1970 and despite efforts to reorganize and restrategize, became a ghost by 1983, when it was bought by another regional rail company. By 1984, the complex was abandoned all together because all that space simply wasn't needed by the diminishing industry. But, not before they left a naively irresponsible legacy of destruction and negligence behind them, as the massive yards were also used for toxic waste dumps and a place to haul train wreck shrapnel over the years, which earned the place an official designation on the Superfund site list, a bone of contention that isn't even expected to be taken seriously until 2031-ish because like everything else, the EPA doesn't have the money. To the locals understandable displeasure, there was quite a bit of opacity about their houses abutting a literal toxic waste dump – information which wasn't even made widely public until some neighbors did a little digging in the late 80s when a pervasive chemically smell began to waft through side streets near the industrial park, and became an uncelebrated normal.

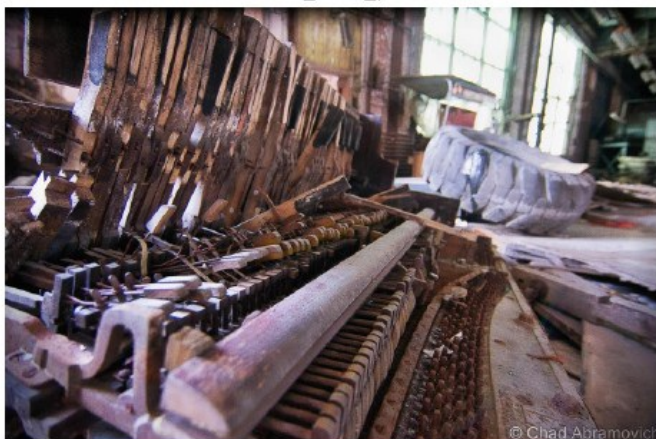
I was able to find a few articles on the local public radio website that explained that the entire 553 acres is so swamped with pollution – ranging from asbestos, arsenic, cadmium, lead, selenium, petrochemicals and waste water lagoons that it not only earned a spot on the national Superfund database list, but it's one of the *worst* in America. "You couldn't leave your house to go out and even have a nice barbecue because the odor was so bad" said an interviewed resident recalling how bad it was a few decades ago. To makes things more apprehensive, The EPA says human exposure risk is still "not under control", though it seems far more controlled today than when the report was written. I guess I can cross off walking around a toxic waste site off my bucket list, regardless of the fact it wasn't



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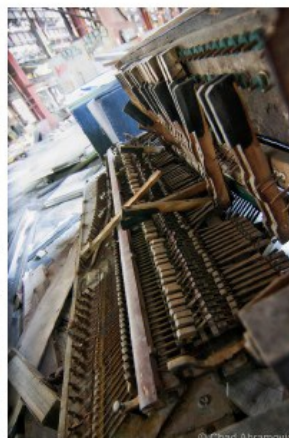
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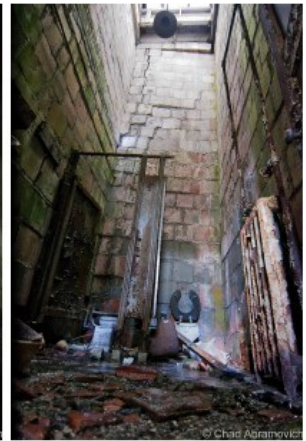
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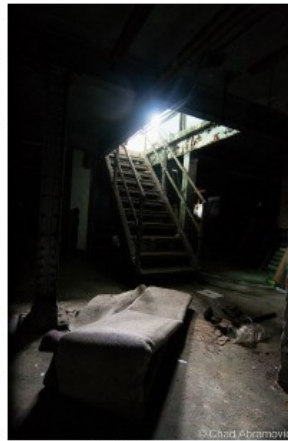
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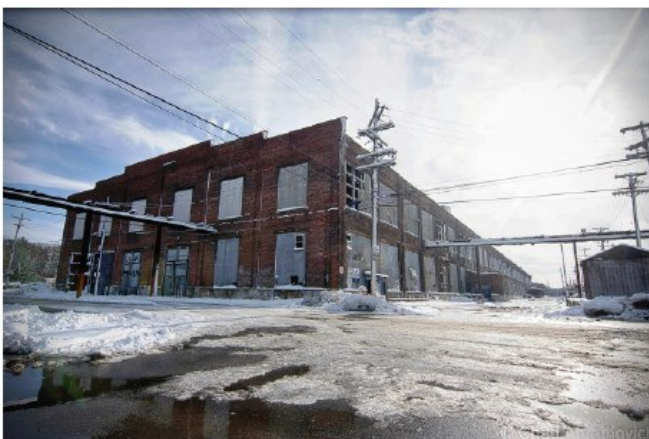
on my list.

Today, most of the former property has been reincarnated as a shabby looking industrial park. The largest railway in New England has its main headquarters here still, that sits directly in the decrepit shadow of the abandoned shop buildings I was walking around, among a few other places with no-frills signage and creepy vacant looking front entrances. That being said, this *is* still an active industrial park, with employees, cops, and on my visit, guys who operate plows, that are present on a daily basis. Unlike me, who technically has no reason to be here other than curiosity. The rail lines that hem in the property are also still in use, and some of the industrial businesses in the park receive rail traffic.

There is always a certain reward to risk ratio that I use as the dichotomy or gauge of how I treat my explores. On this trip, me and my friend decided to simply walk towards the buildings with our cameras, as there was no way we could get inside without someone seeing us, and I didn't drive through three states just to turn around. The man in the plow noticed us as he was relocating a snow drift. We all mutually nodded our heads in affirmation, and confidentially walked inside. We were exploring for four hours or so, and the cops never came, which was great, because this fascinating locale has easily turned into one of my fondest explores. This is one of those places I could return to multiple times and have a different experience at.

But I wouldn't take that one fortunate opportunity for granted. I know a few people who *have* been dragged out by the powers that be before, which is why brushing up on trespassing laws in other states isn't necessarily a bad thing.

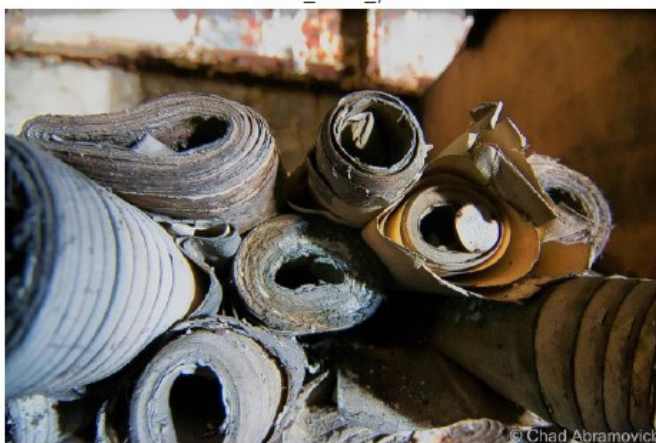
Until some serious clean up and the accompanying scrutiny happens, these hulking and fetid ruins and all their soggy decay are more or less, in limbo.



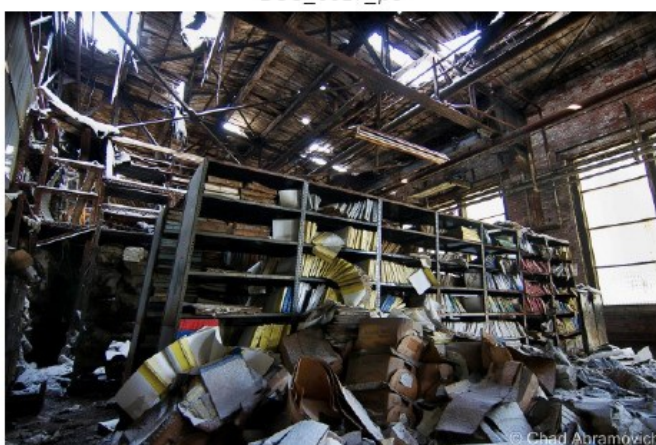
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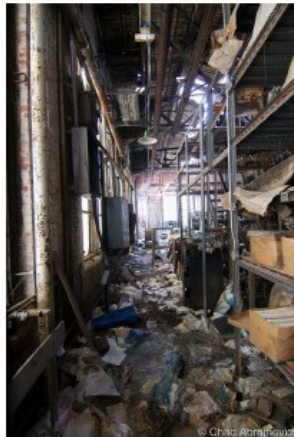
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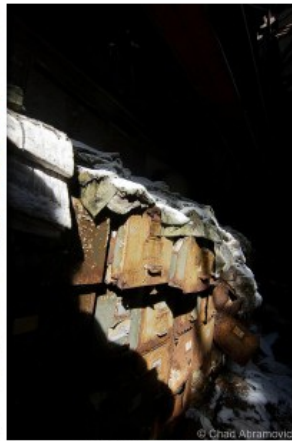
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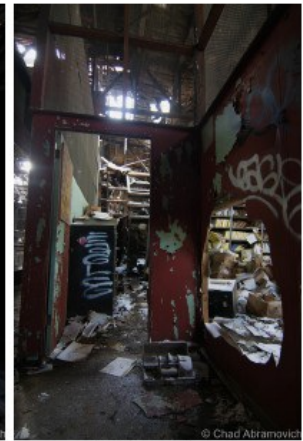
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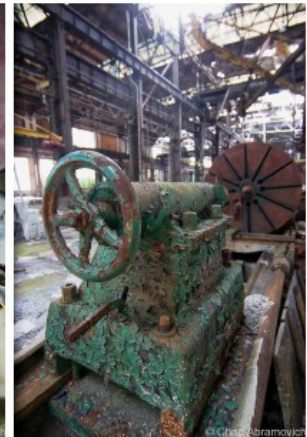
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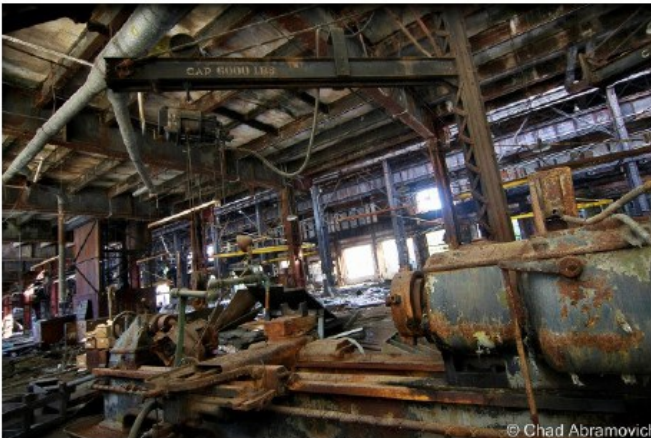


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<http://www.themystica.com/mystica/articles/e/exorcism.html>

Exorcism is mainly thought of as the rite of driving out the Devil and his demons from possessed persons. Exorcism is mainly performed in incidences of demonic possession that is generally distinguished from spiritual possession. A general assumption is that the Roman Catholic singularly practices the rite of exorcism, but some Protestant denominations such as the Pentecostals and other charismatic groups practice it as well. These groups refer to the practice as "deliverance ministry" where gifted people drive out devils and heal while they touch the persons with their hands, called laying on of hands, and pray over them.

Technically, exorcism is not driving out the Devil or a demon, but it is placing the Devil or demon on oath. And, in some incidences there may be more than one demon possessing a person. "Exorcism" is derived from the Greek preposition *ek* with the verb *horkizo* which means "I cause [someone] to swear" and refers to "putting the spirit or demon on oath," or invoking a higher authority to bind the entity in order to control it and command it to act contrary to its own will.

In the Christian sense this higher authority is Jesus Christ. This act is based on the belief that the Devil, his demons, and evil spirits are afraid of Christ. The belief itself is based on Scripture. Coming from the sea of Galilee Christ entered the land of the Gerasenes. He was immediately met by a man from the tombs cut into the mountains of the area. The man was said to be possessed of an unclean spirit. Nothing could bind this man, not even chains. He lived in the mountains, crying, and cutting himself with stones. But, so it is told, when seeing Christ approaching, the man went to him seeking help. The unclean demon immediately recognized Christ, and Christ recognized the demon. Christ, then, summoned the spirit to leave the man, and asked his name. "My name is Legion," answered the spirit, "for we are many." Once the demons left the man, Christ sent them into a nearby herd of swine who then jumped in to the sea and drown. (Mark 5:1-13) Unlike other exorcists, it is believed, that Christ did not exorcise because He did not need to call on a higher authority since He Himself was that higher authority.

Now, not only did Christ exorcise demons, or unclean spirits, but he gave the powers to his disciples. "...he gave the power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease." (Matt.10:1)

From these two Biblical passages and others Catholics and Protestants alike believe they have the power to cast out the Devils and to heal. The Catholic Church has a procedure outlined rite of exorcism which is set forth in "The Rituale Romanum." Other than this text the ritual has great variance determined by the exorcist performing the exorcism. The code of Cannon Law allows authorized ministers (the exorcists) to perform solemn exorcisms not only over the faithful, but also over non-Catholics and those who have been excommunicated from the Church.

During the ritual usually salt, representing purity, and wine, representing the blood of Christ, is present. The victim is to hold a crucifix during the rite. The exorcist is encouraged to use holy water and relics, usually pieces of bones from Saints, and recite Biblical scriptures and other prayers.

The greatest danger to the exorcist is becoming possessed by the Devil or demon himself. This is the reason why the exorcist must feel as free of sin as possible and feel no secret need for punishment. Otherwise, the Devil or demon can easily entrap him. An example of this is Father Jean-Joseph Surin, the Jesuit exorcist of Loudun, who became possessed while ministering to Sister Jeannes des Angest. Surin was reared in a cloister, practiced severe self-denial during his early years as a priest, experienced severe muscle pains, and had virtually cut himself off from all social contact which led him to come to the Sisters' Convent in poor health and a confused state of mind. Unlike his fellow Jesuits he was thoroughly convinced Sister Jeanne and her companion Sisters were truly possessed. Author Aldous Huxley in his "The Devils of Loudun" (1952) described Surin's mental state as one of "pathological illiteracy."

This is possibly the reason that Malachi Martin, a former Jesuit professor, claimed in his book "Hostage to the Devil" (1976), that much of the success of the exorcism depends upon the exorcist. He describes the type of priest best suited to be an exorcist as being a man of good physical health, being of middle age, routinely going about his normal pastoral duties. He usually is not brilliant or engaged in teaching or research. Although, Martin adds, there are exceptions to all these characteristics.

In his book Martin also describes the setting where the exorcism takes place. It is usually in a location where there is a definite connection between the demon and the victim, like the victim's bedroom or resident.

But, again, to Martin, the most important thing is the exorcist's disposition and those of his assistants. Presently few exorcists choose to work alone. Three other people usually assist the exorcist. One is a junior priest who has been trained in exorcism procedures. He monitors the exorcism, helping the exorcist when possible not to be distracted by the possessive demon. Others can include a medical physician and a family member. The most important thing of all is that the exorcist and his assistants be physically strong and relatively guiltless. None must have any secret sins which the Devil or demon can use against them. In some incidences the Devil or demons may shout out the sins of the exorcist or his assistants attempting to shame them and ruin the exorcism.

Although all exorcisms are different in proceeding there are similar stages they follow. Martin describes these stages:

The Presence: The exorcist and his assistants become aware of an alien feeling or entity. Attempts or actions of the evil spirit appear to be the victim's. The exorcist's first job is to break this Pretense and find out whom the demon really is. Gaining the entity's name is most important.

Breakpoint: The moment when the Devil's Pretense finally collapses. This is usually a moment of complete pandemonium. There evolves a scene of panic and

confusion, accompanied by a crescendo of abuse, horrible sights, noises, and odors. The Devil then turns on the victim, speaking of the person in the third person.

The Voice: Also a sign the Breakpoint, the Voice (of the demon) becomes "inordinately disturbing and humanly distressing babble." The demon's voices must be silenced for the exorcism to proceed.

The Clash: As the Voices die out there is both a spiritual and physical pressure. The demon has collided with the "will of the Kingdom." The exorcist is now in direct battle with the demon, urging the entity to reveal more information about itself so it can be controlled. As previously mentioned, there is a connection between the entity and the victim's resident. The entity wants a place to be in, or it must return to Hell. An existence out of Hell is what the Devil or demon is fighting for.

Expulsion: In the supreme triumph of God's will, the demon or spirit leaves in the name of Jesus. All present feel the Presence dissipates, occasionally with receding noises and voices. The victim may remember the ordeal or may not recall anything that has happened.

The ritual of exorcism is more cautiously employed by the Catholic Church at present than it once was. When reviewing the conditions for demonic possession that were once listed one can easily see many of the symptoms are those of epilepsy, hysteria, schizophrenia, and other psychological disorders. So priests are cautioned to be as certain as possible the person is truly demonically possessed before performing the ritual.

In some incidences this precaution may not be enough to guard an innocent person against the ritual. For example, Saint Paul exorcized a slave girl who made much money for her masters by soothsaying. (Acts 16:16-18) Today, occultists call such acts prophecy. Catholics are still forbidden to visit fortune tellers. Other religions such as Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Shinto and others have some form of exorcism rituals. One of the best known Judaic rituals, cited in Judaism rabbinical literature dating from the first century AD, concerns the *dybbuk*, an evil or doomed spirit which possesses a victim and causes mental illness and a personality change. The *dybbuk* is expelled through the victim's small toe, and then is either redeemed or sent to hell.

In many Eastern religions spirits and ghosts are blamed for many ills, and are cast out of people. However, such afflictions are not regarded as all-out battles for the persons' souls. The typical Hindu exorcism practices consist of blowing cow-dung smoke, pressing rock salt between the fingers, burning pig excreta, beating or pulling the victim's hair, reciting prayers or mantras, and offering gifts of candy and other presents to get the evil or troublesome spirits to depart from the persons.

The ritual employed in Shamanism is that the shaman enters a trance during which he attempts to discover the cause of the victim's trouble. Frequently the cause is thought linked to a dead person. The shaman then is said to travel to the lowerworld to speak with this soul. He then knows the cure of this victim's affliction, or may even bring back the soul to cure it.

All persons do not consider the purpose of the ritual of exorcism as expelling the spirit as condemning it to hell as do the Christians. Some, including occultists and Witches, do not consider the spirits demonic but at times become confuse and invade persons' bodies. The purpose of this type of exorcism is to release the spirit. Then the spirit is free to journey onto its resting place or new life. Witches frequently are asked to exorcise ghosts and other unwanted psychic energy that trouble persons.

Spirit exorcisms, as cures of physical illnesses and solutions to other personal problems are common in Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, the Orient, and among tribal cultures.
A.G.H.

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KUON LAILAPS

theoi.com

LAILAPS (or Laelaps) was a magical dog which was always destined to catch his prey. He was first given to Europa of Krete by the god Zeus, and was later handed down through King Minos, to Prokris and Kephalos of Athens.

Kephalos used the hound to hunt down the Teumessian Fox, a monstrous beast which was laying waist to the countryside of Thebes. However, the fox was destined never to be caught, and Zeus, pondering the dilemma of the uncatchable fox being chased by an inescapable hound, turned the pair to stone, or else placed them in the heavens as the Constellations Canis Major and Minor. In so doing he froze their contest or set it to play out for eternity in the heavens.

Lailaps may be the same as Golden Hound which was set to guard the infant Zeus on Krete.

ENCYCLOPEDIA

LAELAPS (Lailaps), i. e. the storm-wind, which is personified in the legend of the dog of Procris which bore this name. Procris had received this extremely swift animal as a present, either from Artemis or Minos, and afterwards left it to her husband Cephalus. When the Teumessian fox was sent as a punishment to the Thebans, to which they had to sacrifice a boy every month, and when Creon had requested Amphytrion to deliver the city of the monster fox, Cephalus sent out the dog Laelaps against the fox. The dog overtook the fox, but Zeus changed both animals into a stone, which was shown in the neighbourhood of Thebes. (Apollod. ii. 4. § 6; Hygin. *Fab. 189*, *Poet. Astr.* ii. 35; Ov. *Met.* vii. 771.)

Source: Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology.

Homerica, The Epigoni Frag 2 (from Photius, Lexicon s.v. Teumesia) (trans. Evelyn-White) (Greek epic C7th B.C.) :

"The Teumesian Fox . . . was sent by the gods to punish the descendants of Kadmos, and that the Thebans therefore excluded those of the house of Kadmos from the kingship. But they say a certain Kephalos, the son of Deion, an Athenian, who owned a Hound [Laelaps] which no beast ever escaped, had accidentally killed his wife Prokris, and being purified of the homicide by the Kadmeans, hunted the Fox with his Hound, and when they had overtaken it both Hound and Fox were turned into stones near Teumessos. These writers have taken the story from the *Epic Cycle*."

Pseudo-Apollodorus, Bibliotheca 2. 57 (trans. Aldrich) (Greek mythographer C2nd A.D.) :

"A wild Fox was creating havoc in the land [of Thebes]. But despite Amphytrion's attempts [to destroy it], it was fated that no one would subdue this Fox. As the land continued in torment, the Thebans once a month would set out one of the citizen's children for it, for otherwise it would have seized many of them. Amphytrion went to Deioneus' son Kephalos at Athens, and after promising him a share of the booty from the Teleboan expedition, persuaded him to bring to the Fox hunt the Dog [Laelaps] which Prokris had received from Minos and brought from Krete, for it was also fated that this Dog would catch whatever it chased. Consequently, when the Fox was chased by the Dog, Zeus turned them both to stone [the only solution to the contradictory fates of a Fox destined never be caught being chased by a dog destined to catch whatever it chased]."

Pausanias, Description of Greece 9. 19. 1 (trans. Jones) (Greek travelogue C2nd A.D.) :

"On this highway is a place called Teumessos, where it is said that Europa was hidden by Zeus. There is also another legend, which tells of a Fox called the Teumessian Fox, how owing to the wrath of Dionysos the beast was reared to destroy the Thebans, and how, when about to be caught by the Hound [Lailaps] given by Artemis to Prokris the daughter of Erekhtheus, the Fox was turned into a stone, as was likewise

this Hound."

Antoninus Liberalis, *Metamorphoses* 41 (trans. Celoria) (Greek mythographer C2nd A.D.) :

"Minos gave Prokris his spear and his dog [Lailaps] [after she cured him of the curse his wife Pasiphae had placed on him]. No animal could escape these two and they always reached their target. Accepting them, Prokris went to Thorikos in Attika, where Kephalos lived, and became a hunter with him. She had altered her clothes and had cut her hair as a man; no one who saw her recognised her. When Kephalos saw that he never caught anything when hunting, while everything went the way of Prokris, he yearned to have that spear for himself. Prokris promised to give him the dog as well, if he would agree to enjoy her youthful charms. Kephalos accepted the proposition and when they lay down together, Prokris revealed who she was and reproached him for having committed something far more disgraceful. But Kephalos acquired the dog and the spear.

Amphitryon who needed the dog, went to Kephalos and asked him if he would be willing to join him, with the dog, in going after the [Teumessian] Fox. He promised to hand over to him a share of the booty which he would take from the Teleboans.

For at that time there had appeared in the land of the people of Kadmos, a Fox was a monstrous creature. It would regularly issue out of Teumessos snatching up Kadmeans. Every thirty days they would put out a child for it and the Fox would take it and eat it up. Amphitryon had asked Kreon and the Kadmeans to help in making war against the Teleboians. They refused unless he helped them do away with the Fox. Amphitryon accepted these conditions from the Kadmeans and went to Kephalos and told him about the agreement and urged him to go to Thebes with the dog. Kephalos accepted the proposal and set out to hunt the Fox. But it had been ordained that the Fox could not be taken by any hunter, and that nothing should escape that dog when it went hunting. Zeus saw them when they reached the plain of Thebes and turned them both into stones."

Pseudo-Hyginus, *Fabulae* 189 (trans. Grant) (Roman mythographer C2nd A.D.) :

"Procris fled to the island of Crete [after discovering that her husband Cephalus was having an affair with the dawn-goddess Eos], where Diana [Artemis] used to hunt. When Diana saw her, she said to her : 'virgins hunt with me, but you are not a virgin, leave my company.' Procris revealed to her her misfortune and told her that she had been deceived by Aurora [Eos the Dawn]. Diana, moved by pity, gave her a javelin which no one could avoid, and the dog Laelaps which no wild beast could escape, and bade her go contend with Cephalus. With her hair cut, and in young man's attire, by the will of Diana, she came to Cephalus and challenged him, and surpassed him in the hunt. When Cephalus saw that javelin and Dog were so irresistible, he asked the stranger to sell them to him, not knowing she was his wife. She refused. He promised her also a share in his kingdom [of Phokis]; she still refused. 'But if,' she said, 'you really continue to want this, grant me what boys are won to grant.' Inflamed by desire for the javelin and the Dog, he promised he would. When they had come into the bed-chamber, Procris took off her tunic and showed that she was a woman and his wife. Cephalus took the gifts and came again into her favour."

Pseudo-Hyginus, *Astronomica* 2. 35 :

"[Constellation Dog :] He is said to have been given by Jove [Zeus] as a guardian for Europa, and later to have come to Minos. When Minos was ill, Procris, wife of Cephalus, is said to have cured him, and received the dog as a reward for her services, as she was very fond of hunting and the dog was so swift that no beast could escape. After her death the dog came to Cephalus her husband, who brought it to Thebes with him when he came. There was a fox there which was said to be so swift that it could outrun all dogs. So when the two animals met, Jupiter [Zeus], in a dilemma, as Istrus says, changed them both to stone."

Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 7. 745 ff (trans. Melville) (Roman epic C1st B.C. to C1st A.D.) :

"She [Prokris] gave me [Kephalos] too, as though herself were gift of small account, a hound [Lailaps] her own Cynthia [Artemis] had given her, saying 'He'll outrun them all.' The javelin too she gave me which you see. You ask the story of the other gift? I'll tell a tale to take your breath away. The riddle that had baffled earlier brains was solved by Laiades [Oidipous son of Laius] and headlong down the

Carmina [Sphinx] had fallen, her mysteries forgotten. At once a second plague was launched on Thebae Aoniae, a savage beast [the Teumessian Fox] that killed and feasted on the farmfolk and their flocks. We, the young squires, ringed the broad pastures with our hunting nets, but with a bound the beast was over them, clearing the tops of our entanglements. We slipped our dogs; the beast, as they gave chase, fled like a bird and mocked our hundred hounds. With one accord my comrades called to me for Laelaps (Whirlwind) (my find gift-hound), who for long had fought the leash that checked him. He was loosed and straightway lost to sight; the hot dust held his footprints; he had vanished; not so swift a lance's flight or bullets from a sling or slender arrows from a Cretan bow. Some rising ground commanded the wide fields; I climbed the top and gained a grandstand view of that strange chase; one moment the beast's caught the next the death-wound's missed him - he's escaped. His course was cunning, never straight for long; he doubled back and circled to deceive the chasing jaws, to foil his foe's assault. The hound pressed close, clung step for step; it seemed he'd got him, but he failed and snapped the air. My javelin must help, I thought, and while I weighed it in my hand and tried to fit my fingers in the loop, I glanced aside, and when I looked again--amazing sight!--there in the open plain below I saw two marble statues, one of them, you'd swear, in flight, the other pouncing on its prey. Some god, if gods were watching, must have willed that both should be unbeaten in that chase."

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Posted on January 20, 2016 By Chad Abramovich



Logo



Shade Roller Factory and the falls, late 1800s. The building has undergone many transformations and skins since it's inception. I was really interested in all the wood work along the ledges, which has all since been replaced by sturdier and safer concrete. | UVM Center For Digital Initiatives Factory Workers, when operations depended more on man power than machine power. Undated. | UVM Center For Digital Initiatives

In 1865, this white clapboarded factory complex was built directly hemmed in by an impressive series of waterfalls that tumble around a

pronounced soaring island. These falls attracted plenty of practitioners of industry that enriched the city they hung their hats in. Two centuries later, and times have changed. Most of the city's industrial cred went the same way as all of the factories before it, and became ghosts when outsourcing meant people could exploit labor overseas, for cheaper. But the profitable legacy left it's mark along it's glorious main drag, which is lined with multiple beautifully upkept Italianate mansions and dignified downtown blocks filled with the usual cafes and miscellaneous shops where unique sets of raised sidewalks connect them together.

While many old haunts have found new lives as other incarnations, some edifices still remain forsaken and neglected. This factory, built to manufacture window shades and the accompanying rollers, closed sometime after the 50s, a reduction of it's original campus that consisted of several other buildings on riverfront property, now a patch of overgrown woods that climb down to a canoe portage area with an extraordinary view of the falls and the defiant buildings built into their vertical drop. According to vague historical records, there were a few tunnels built underneath the falls, both for rerouting water needed for power, and other unidentified tunnel related purposes. But if any should remain today, well, I saw no evidence of sealed doorways or any other giveaways. At least in the dark basement of the factory. Chances are, they may have been long blocked off for safety reasons.

An amiable woman was able to weigh in while I was snapping a few photos from across the street, and informed me that the present owners plan to eventually gut it and turn it into riverfront condos – a well worn trend with old factories these days and a trend that I'm very okay with, as I live in a place built in 1896 and really dig it. But, the building currently remains vacant, it's bones still reminiscent of it's former identity. The surprisingly large interior was nestled like a dislocated jewel amongst a charming historic town and perennial leaf peepers bottlenecking across the bridge. Inside, a series of creaky old wooden staircases and a large catwalk brought my wondering feet to various levels of the building, a mixture of vast open work spaces and smaller closed off rooms and offices. Some areas were still were done in character adding original wainscoting while others were functionally modernized in ugly linoleum floors and standard white drywall.

The day was warm, bright and clear for mid October, but the insides emitted a damp air despite being well lit from the shine of the sun coming through it's rows of broken windows. Overall, the interior had been gutted, and what remained was either a mystery to me, or looked like banal piles of storage. It was also pleasantly void of the usual caveats; graffiti and empty beer cans of the mediocre variety. But the upper floors had quite a few bird nests constructed in some variously tight spaces, and animal feces on the floors, so it gets *some* visitors.

Though this wasn't one of my favorite explores, Vermont is lacking in abandoned industrial properties, and for that reason alone made this place desirable to me. And I *did* enjoy my time here. I've often driven by this stand out building on numerous trips to Southern Vermont or Upstate New York, and have wanted to explore it, so I'm glad I took the time on that beautiful autumn day to wonder around a bit, even if only for a few minutes. My roommate enthusiastically accompanied me on my infiltration, which means I picked a great person to live with.



Shade Roller Factory, 2015

Shade Roller Factory and the falls, late 1800s. The building has undergone many transformations and skins since it's inception. I was really interested in all the wood work along the ledges, which has all since been replaced by sturdier and safer concrete. | UVM Center For Digital Initiatives

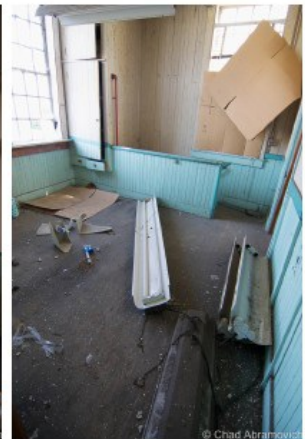


Factory Workers, when operations depended more on man power than machine power. Undated. | UVM Center For Digital Initiatives

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Fair Haven man denies threatening bystanders with chain saw

2016/05/04

wcax.com

RUTLAND, Vt. (AP) - A western Vermont man has denied charges that he threatened to kill a crowd of people gathered outside a Rutland dance club with a chain saw earlier this year.

The Rutland Herald reports 26-year-old Justin Allen pleaded not guilty in Rutland on Monday to charges of felony aggravated assault with a deadly weapon, reckless endangerment and disorderly conduct.

Allen faces up to six years in prison if he's convicted.

Police say Allen terrorized a group of 20 people standing outside The Local on Merchants Row with a running chain saw just before closing time on March 26.

The first officer on the scene, Cpl. Damon Nguyen, arrived just after 2 a.m. to find Allen with the chainsaw. The Fair Haven man was arrested shortly after more law enforcement officials responded.

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Fear and Black Dogs - Beachcombing's Bizarre History Blog [strangehistory.net](http://www.strangehistory.net)

<http://www.strangehistory.net/2013/08/30/fear-and-black-dogs/>

The outlandish, the anomalous and the curious from the last five thousand years

Fear and Black Dogs *August 30, 2013*

Black dogs – and we've covered a few posts on this subject with fairy dogs and the black dog of Bungay: why are they so frightening? Ian McEwan's best novel is probably *Black Dogs* in which idealism destroys evil catches the terror of big black canines perfectly. But Beach was terrified too in his recent reading of *Shock*. Two passages stand out. The first is when David Waldron has a night-time encounter with a giant dog in his backyard, which kills his cat in front of him. He heads back into the house and comes out again in the morning to find that the dog is a friendly (cat-killing) bull terrier cross with a wagging tale. Then, second, there is the even more striking case from Christopher Reeve, local Bungay historian.

A few years ago, I was asked to give a talk about the Black Dog to Bungay Primary School pupils. The subject is on their curriculum because it forms a significant part of local history. The children, about forty of them, were about six to nine-years-old, and they assembled with their teachers and some parents in St Mary's Church where the historic event had occurred. I narrated the story, and then because they seemed very concerned about it, emphasized that the event had happened a long time ago, and there was no reason to fear that the Black Dog might still be around.

That last sentence is not going to sound very convincing to a seven-year-old is it? Sure enough one little girl contradicts him: apparently her grandmother has seen the Shock! And other children's back her up. (Nothing like seeing a local expert outflanked by kids.) That week the history teacher got a number of complaints from parents about nightmares and crying fits. And, well, they might. The most terrifying images in Waldron and Reeve's book are actually the children's pictures of the black dog: it was a stroke of genius to put them in. There we come closest to the visceral fear that a dog in the dark can cause. Now the question is a simple one, **why**: drbeachcombing AT yahoo DOT com Is it just a natural instinct against one of our traditional enemies, the wolf, or is it something more? Are we relieving the drama of hunter gathering or plunging into some Jungian whirlpool of associations? And where do Alien Big Cats come into all this. Why aren't there more Alien Big Dogs?

31 Aug 2013: CS writes: Apologies if you covered this topic in the past, or tangented it, but I'm still putting it out there. Black Dog Bias "Black dog bias is a veterinarian and animal shelter phenomenon in which black dogs are passed over for adoption in favor of lighter-colored animals.[1] Black dog bias is also known as "big black dog syndrome." Shelters often use the term BBD, or big black dog, to describe the type of larger dark-colored mixed-breed typically passed over by adopters." Maybe it has roots in folklore' Then there is Ivo: I've

studied the subject of the black dog for years. Here in Holland we have numerous stories with black dogs. A lot of them are so called kettinghonden (chained dogs), dogs of farmers, chained outside. They let their presence known by rattling a chain, just like ghosts and some ufo stories. On the subject of fear: in the talk radio show of Theo Paijmans in ca. 1997 (I was his sidekick and note taker on the show) there was a caller who saw a big orange orb of light which flew next to him, about 10 yards away on the right. It followed him for about 100 yards, after which it flew away. The sighting is not that remarkable, but he told the audience that he was afraid, very afraid during the encounter. He was an ex-marine (aren't they all:-) and he said he was afraid of nothing. But the moment the orb came into view and started to follow him, he felt afraid, more afraid than ever. He had never been so afraid of something in his life. What, indeed, is this fear. Numbers of ufo sighters mention this fear, Bigfoot sighters as well. It seems that the paranormal has a fear component, which seems to make it a physical something. Something intrusive into our reality. Yeeps! Finally we have the great Mike Dash: I think the imagery of Hans Christian Anderson helps to explain their impact ... I still vividly remember the fairy story (The Tinder Box) about the dog with eyes as big as saucers, and the one with eyes as big as mill wheels, etc. It's something that's familiar (a dog) that morphs into something that is supernatural (a very big dog, with very peculiar eyes) – that is, the supernatural sneaking up on us when we are unawares, and getting right up close before the big jump cut. PS – Are you familiar with the tale of the Grey Dog of Meoble? That's my personal favourite. Thanks to Mike, CS and Ivo.

2 Sep 2013: Ivo (not Ivor as I wrote before apologies), sent in this second part. I've been going through some of my books on folklore to see if fear was a factor in the Dutch stories on black dogs, but so far not much luck. Fear come into play with almost every ghost story, and black dog stories are a form of the ghost story. A curious story on a man called Jan Betz, a tailor at Bergeik, who in 1827 wanted to go home at night, wandered over the fields and met a monster or ghost (invisible?). He got stuck there (Oz factor?), but managed to poke the thing with a stick for some time. Did anybody say these stories have to make sense? Anyway, he was scared out of his mind and later on saw and heard ghosts on the road. Another story with Betz in it relates that he accompanied a young daughter and that they saw a dog beside the road. Betz wanted to hit it with his stick. Meanwhile they heard the rattling of chains, but saw nothing. Betz then saw a sheep. Betz carried the fainted, frightened daughter to a house nearby. Source: Willem de Blécourt, Volksverhalen uit Noord Brabant, (1980 Het Spectrum), 2.58 & 2.69. More stories on ghosts and monsters there at Bergeik; and more aggressive men with sticks, who hit these monsters and ghosts. Maybe there's a connection? The men are frightened and arm themselves. What are they frightened of? Wandering alone at night in the countryside can make someone frightened. Also, the stories are anecdotal and have absurd elements. This seems to say they are made up or are sightings of illusions. I've been collecting and studying stories and anecdotes about ufos, ghosts, fortean stuff, faeries and other strange things for over twenty years now and most stories can be brought back to illusions, fear and superstition. Even though, they are still fascinating. Some ideas, picked up whilst reading Bob Trubshaw (Ed.), *Explore Phantom Black Dogs* (2005 Heart of Albion Press): The black dog is the apparition of a wicked person (sometimes) and wickedness is scary. Also: the black dog is the devil, a famous scary entity. Maybe: the black dog is a natural phenomenon and its energies play havoc with our brain. Or: lots of black dog stories are played out in the open field, far from civilization; so when someone walks these fields and

roads late at night, fright can overcome them; their fear makes it into a black dog – a known element of ghost stories. Strange: numerous tales of black dogs are of the 'guardian' type, in which the fear has gone. See Harte, 'Black dog studies', in Trubshaw (2005) for the changing role of the black dog, from evil spirit, to guardian and a whole lot more. Some people thought that to see a black dog was an omen of death; someone would die after seeing the dog. Isn't that enough to put a scare in your pants? On another note: I love the element of the chain: it is around the neck of the animal, or it is heard but not seen, it rattles or jingles, it glows, it is dragged. Crazy stories! Also very interesting: Simon Burchell, Phantom Black Dogs in Latin America, 2007 Heart of Albion Press. Thanks Ivo and sorry again about the name mix up!

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School project's graffiti sparks fears Zodiac Killer is back

April 27, 2016

yahoo.com

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — A Florida State University class project about drug cartels and serial killers took a turn when students scrawled a message on a sidewalk associated with the infamous Zodiac Killer.

The Tallahassee Democrat (<http://on.tdo.com/242lf6G>) reported Wednesday that police started investigating after finding the message that included the cipher associated with the serial killer responsible for several unsolved murders in northern California in the late '60s and early '70s.

The message near a student apartment complex stated "I'm alive and well and I'm going to start killing again."

Police stepped up patrols and eventually discovered it was done for an English class project. Students were told to write a message in a public forum and take a picture of it.

Tallahassee police spokesman David Northway called it a class project gone wrong.

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PICTURED: Shadowy figure of female 'vampire ghost' terrorising schools in Malaysia

23:16, 20 Apr 2016

thesun.co.uk

Students and teachers in the country have complained of possession by evil spirits



ghost

The 'pontianak' is a kind of vampire ghost from Malaysian folklore said to be the spirit of a woman who died in childbirth

A PICTURE has emerged claiming to show one of the female vampire ghosts that have been terrorising schools in Malaysia.

The spooky snap shows a shadowy figure peering out from behind a pillar in a corridor.

It is claimed that the image shows one of the evil spirits that have been causing havoc in schools around the country.

The 'pontianak' is a kind of vampiric female ghost from Malaysian and Indonesian folklore.

The northern region of Kota Baru has seen the hysteria reach 'epidemic' levels

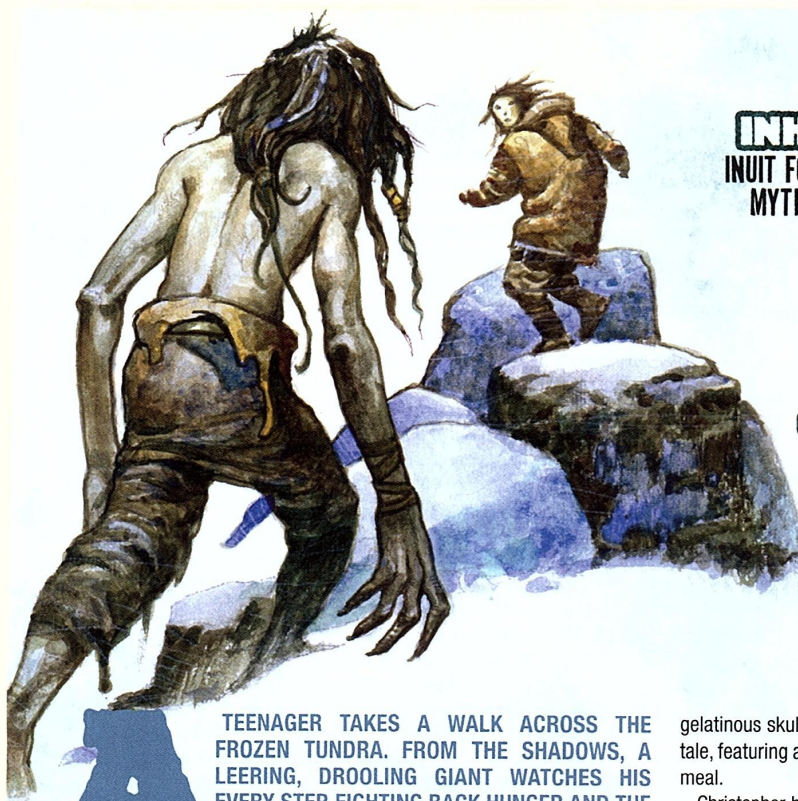
The restless spirits of women who died on childbirth, they are said to have come back from beyond the grave to prey on men.

Both students and teachers have reported seeing the spectres, with one teacher even claiming to have been physically pinned down after going to help a student who said she had seen a ghost.

The sightings have been described as an 'epidemic' with one school shutting down and another group of 20 students having to be sent home in one go.

The local education authority in Kota Baru has even called in shamans and religious leaders to clear out the ghosts, according to the Straits Times.

Google Earth



INHABIT MEDIA MINES TRADITIONAL INUIT FOLK TALES FOR THE STRANGEST AND SCARIEST MYTHOLOGICAL CREATURES YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF

FIENDS OF THE FAR NORTH

BY PAUL COUNELIS

A TEENAGER TAKES A WALK ACROSS THE FROZEN TUNDRA. FROM THE SHADOWS, A LEERING, DROOLING GIANT WATCHES HIS EVERY STEP, FIGHTING BACK HUNGER AND THE TEMPTATION TO REVEAL HIMSELF. He is the mon-

strous hunter of the cold northern night, sizing up his prey: the young man who is just out for a midnight stroll, and has suddenly become potential dinner for an entire family of monsters.

Inuit, indigenous to the North American arctic regions, have a strong tradition of storytelling and folklore, and some of their most beloved tales have their basis in the darker aspects of arctic life and the monster myths and legends of the area. Since 2007, Nunavut-based publisher Inhabit Media has collected chilling stories, such as the one above, in a series of young adult hardcover collections.

"Folk tales tell us a lot about the cultures and environment they are from," says Inhabit Media publisher Neil Christopher. "It makes sense that the unpredictable and harsh climate of the Arctic and the difficult lives of the Inuit have produced some of the scariest folk tales I have ever encountered. In Canada, we have a people that have a storytelling tradition that is just as rich and complex as any other culture."

Inhabit's collections present some unique spins on monster lore. For example, *The Shadows That Rush Past*, a remarkably illustrated picture book, features a legend that finds a ghastly, smiling fiend jumping out of the dark and tickling unsuspecting campers to death; *Ajiiit: Dark Dreams of the Ancient Arctic* anthology is loaded with jarring imagery, such as a misshapen chimera who rises formlessly from the sea with its face dripping off of its

gelatinous skull; and *The Legend of the Fog* is a vividly rendered monster tale, featuring a huge creature stalking the icy terrain for its family's nightly meal.

Christopher has plans to continue exploring the darker side of Inuit storytelling with annual releases.

"It will take many years to get the stories we have already found to print," he notes. "We are constantly doing research and recording more of them."

There are also three older releases in the Inhabit Media monster collection, each covering a different traditional creature fable. Among those books is a powerful set of tales called *Arctic Giants*, written by Christopher himself and illustrated by Eva Widemann, who's known for her extensive fantasy and creature artwork for *Dungeons & Dragons* projects, and *Arctic Giants*, which is merciless in its depiction of the legendary barbaric titans who stalk the North, with no regard for the lives of their tiny human victims.

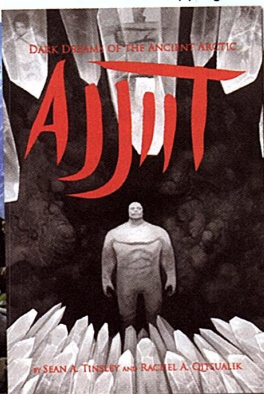
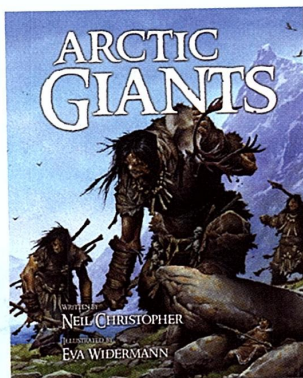
"These stories are filled with some of the most formidable creatures I have ever read about," affirms Christopher.

The company has also entered the world of film, with a series of animated shorts featuring some of the monsters from these myths. The first, *Amaqut Nunaat: The Country of Wolves*, has already won three film festival awards. "It's about two brothers who encounter shape-shifting wolves that have a taste for human flesh," explains Christopher. "They may seem like werewolves, but they are not. They are ancient wolves that possess the ability to assume human form."

Christopher is a man on a mission, seeking to ensure that the Inuit oral tradition is preserved, while also making the general public aware of the spine-chilling stories and inventive imagination on display in these distinctively regional tales. He believes that Inuit

folklore has something different to offer the modern horror enthusiast, who may be getting burnt out on vampires, werewolves and other standard-issue narratives.

"I would like horror fans and filmmakers to become aware of the monsters and horrors that have been whispered from storyteller to storyteller for thousands of years in the North," he says, before teasing that as far as Inhabit Media's genre releases go, "The best is yet to come."



Bystanders break up bizarre scuffle between angry KKK members and black pro-Confederate activist

rawstory.com

Travis Gettys

10 May 2016 at 12:10 ET



HK Edgerton (James Scott/Facebook)

A black pro-Confederate demonstrator was met by angry Ku Klux Klan members at a Florida park in a Dave Chappelle sketch come to life.

H.K. Edgerton, the former president of the NAACP chapter in Asheville, North

Carolina, travels the South wearing a Confederate army uniform to promote his belief that the seditious government was not racist.

The 68-year-old Edgerton baffled his former colleagues by campaigning in favor of pro-Confederate groups and promoting their symbols — which many Americans perceive as antagonistic emblems of the slavery and racism.

He stood beside a Confederate monument in Asheville last year holding the “Stars and Bars” battle flag after vandals painted “Black Lives Matter” on the pedestal a week after a white supremacist who posed with the flag gunned down nine black worshipers at a South Carolina church.

He’s also made lengthy — and solo — marches across the South over the past 16 years to promote his belief that Confederate heritage was not necessarily racist, and he’s currently walking across Florida for the same purpose.

Edgerton, wearing a gray historical uniform, was paying his respects Monday morning at the Hemming Park Confederate Monument in Jacksonville when several members of an area KKK chapter confronted him, reported WTLV-TV.

The racist group argued with Edgerton until witnesses came to his defense and defused the situation.

The Southern Legal Resource Center, where Edgerton is a board member, said they weren’t sure why KKK members protested the black pro-Confederate activist’s demonstration.

Pro-Confederate groups rallied behind Edgerton, who has been accused by critics of “neo-Confederate revisionism,” demonstrating some of the complexities about race and southern

heritage that the comedian Chappelle toyed with in his old Comedy Central series.

"Mr. H.K. and the other true Southerners in Florida can handle these ignoramuses," said Facebook user Robin Foster Osorio-Pedraza. "I'm glad they're all looking out for each other. We don't like it when white supremists (sic) use our Confederate battle flag. It belongs to us, the descendants of those who served under it in the War of North Agression (sic)."

The administrator of one pro-Confederate social media page lashed out at the "freaks in the sheets" who protested Edgerton's appearance.

"To those idiots in the dunce caps.... Y'all got your asses handed to you at Stone Mountain, beat down in Anaheim, and made a fool of on CNN by a black comedian. And now this. Y'all are more like the Keystone Kops than an organization of fear. Let it go and crawl back into your momma's basement," posted the administrator of the "We Support the Confederate Flag" page.

Edgerton argued against slavery reparations in a 2006 episode of Penn and Teller's "Bullshit," and he threatened a lawsuit in 2009 against a newly elected Asheville City Council member because he was an atheist.

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Fish With Gold Collars at Versailles: 1907

wordpress.com

<https://mrsdaffodildigresses.wordpress.com/2014/05/23/the-fish-with-gold-collars-at-versailles-1907/>
Mrs Daffodil Digresses**A blog about costume, history, and social ephemera****FISH WITH GOLD COLLARS PROCLAIM TROUBLE FOR FRANCE**

Ghosts of Marie Antoinette and Her Two Children Said To Again Walk in the Gardens of Versailles as Before the Franco Prussian War.

Versailles Near Paris July 22, 1907

The gentle ghosts of Marie Antoinette and her two children again walk in the forest of Versailles, foreboding change and trouble to France. Five ancient carp, with their gold collars round their necks, have again emerged from the mud of the hamlet pond, to show themselves beneath the little old stone bridge—as they did before the Franco-Prussian War.

In 1869 most Frenchmen laughed at the same signs and portents. Those who listened and believed went to the war with Prussia discouraged in advance.

"If Monsieur would see Louis XVI's carp, let Monsieur stand silent on this bridge with me," mumbled old Jehan Collot, who is 95, to the writer the other day. "I, Jehan, first saw them as a boy of 17 in 1829. Charles X was king. He lived chiefly at St. Cloud, but when they told him the carp had come out of the mud, he hurried here in his old black traveling coach, with six horses, troubled. He stood where Monsieur stands and he saw four of the carp swim past and disappear in the black shadows under the bridge. One year later, France lost her last legitimate king by revolution.

"When did they next show?" was asked.

"Louis Philippe, King of the French, lived much at the Grand Trianon," replied the ancient servant. "I helped put in the heaters, the first hot-air registers in France."

The Fish Appears.

"When I saw the carp come up again in 1847, I told my wife only. Whom did she tell? Everybody! She is dead. God rest her. The King came, very grave, and asked me. We stood on this small bridge. Five carp swam by, with gold collars shining red, and disappeared in the black shadows under the bridge. Next year came revolution and more troubles! "Three years later, in the autumn of 1850, I saw them again. They swam back and forth in commotion. I said nothing. Louis Napoleon made his coup d'etat and promoted me to be third gardener.

"Then the carp did not come up until 1869?"

"In 1862, monsieur," said Collet. "Napoleon heard of them. He laughed: 'They bring me luck!' he said, as he stood with me. 'Where monsieur stands watching for the carp as monsieur watches.' Next year came the disastrous Mexican adventure—and the beginnings of the end. I knew it. So did Napoleon. In 1869 he did not laugh. The five old carp swam past, one by one, in a line, and disappeared in the black shadows under the bridge. Sh__!"

A horny old hand was incontinently clapped over the writer's mouth. We stood silent, immobile. A great leathery-hided, shapeless, half-blind old fish lolled past. Round his neck, behind the gills, seemed a dull copper band. Two such fish were seen. The second was like the first. He slouched past and disappeared

in the black shadows under the bridge.

It is the same little bridge, by the way, from which the Queen of Norway's horses fell on her late visit.

Carp Were Collared.

"Changes, troubles, revolutions," croaked old Jehan Collot. "Jehan don't care. He is an old man."

The historical truth of the carp appears to be certain. Louis XIV, a youth of ingenious turn of mind, learned the trade of clockmaker, then turned to locksmithing. Given to natural history, he meditated much on the long lives attributed to elephants, turtles, eagles, whales, sharks and carp. In the forest gardens of Versailles, there were no wild beasts. So he began with turtles.

He cut his name and the date on their backs with a jackknife, such as everybody has in his pocket. Finally the young Prince turned to the carp pond. He caused Jehan Collot's grandfather to catch 10 solid young carp in a hand net. The gold collars had been prepared. There were 10 names engraved on the heavy gold bands, the date, the Prince's name and arms, with the sonorous Latin line:

"Mari pisces currant jam! (Let the fishes run in the sea!)"

Once collared, the carp were replaced in the carp pond. They have lived there ever since. Of late, they have been seen by thousands, one or two at a time, never all five together.

This pond to-day is the original carp pond, beside which Marie Antoinette's playhouse village was later constructed. It gets none of the water of the Titanic fountains of Versailles, that had their origin in Louis XIV's folly, but which, nevertheless, made Versailles the healthiest town in France....

The Gardens' Ghost

To dream of it one must walk through the forest park of dark and drizzling afternoons in autumn, when there are no sight-seers. When the mist rises over the carp pond, when the leaves fall sodden, when the hamlet of the beautiful Queen fades in the great silence, as old Jehan said.

"Would Monsieur behold her, the beautiful Antoinette?"

The writer and Jehan were alone at dusk. We stood across the carp pond, opposite the house of the Queen, with its communicating bridge veranda. Beside us was the dairy where poor Marie played milkmaid, sleeves up, singing as she patted the butter.

"Monsieur, the Queen walks again, with the two children!" whispered the ancient gardener. "Let Monsieur come the night of the 25th, full moon. Monsieur shall sit with Jehan Collot, where he knows, the right spot, sit at midnight, in the full moon!"

"Have you seen her?" was asked.

"Fear not," he answered, "no harm will come to him who sits with a Collot, father and son, son and father, back two hundred years.

"Jehan, have you seen her?"

"The Queen walked in 1829. I was a boy of seventeen. She walked in 1847. She walked in 1850, in 1862, in 1869. And now she walks again! Trouble and change! New things for France," the old man mumbled. *Cincinnati [OH] Enquirer* 4 August 1907: p. B3.

Mrs Daffodil's *Aide-memoire*: The ghost of Marie Antoinette has long been said to haunt the Trianon. In fact two English lady educators, Charlotte Anne Moberly and Eleanor Jourdain, wrote a book about what they considered to have been a time-travelling adventure in the gardens in 1901, called, aptly enough,

An Adventure. (1911) The ladies have been criticised for their lack of scholarly rigour, but it is still a fascinating story. More recent visitors have also claimed to see the Queen's ghost.

The fish (as noted by M. Collot) seem to have been relatively accurate prophets. Whenever they appeared, something of dire import occurred within a year.

1829: 1830 the July Revolution in which King Charles X was overthrown in favour of Louis-Philippe, Duke of Orleans

1847: In 1848 Louis-Philippe abdicated

1850: 1851 the coup d'etat which made Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte, President of the Second Republic, Emperor Napoleon III,

1862: 1863 Maximillian accepted the Mexican crown after French intervention in Mexico.

1869: 1870 Franco-Prussian War and Napoleon III dethroned by the Third Republic.

1907: 1908 It is here that the fish prophets seem to falter. Were there sabre-rattlings by the Kaiser in 1908, presaging the ruinous Great War of 1914? That literally earth-shattering incident, The Tunguska Event, occurred in June of 1908, but one could scarcely claim that it had any significant impact on France. One wishes that one knew what the fish were trying to say.

Mrs Daffodil invites you to join her on the curiously named "Face-book," where you will find a feast of fashion hints, fads and fancies, and historical anecdotes.

This entry was posted in Animals, Aristocracy, Edwardian, Ghosts, History 1800-1837, News and Announcements, Royalty, Supernatural, Victorian, Wonders and Curiosities and tagged carp in collars, French history, ghosts of Versailles, Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette, prophecies, Trianon, Versailles on May 23, 2014 by chriswoodyard.

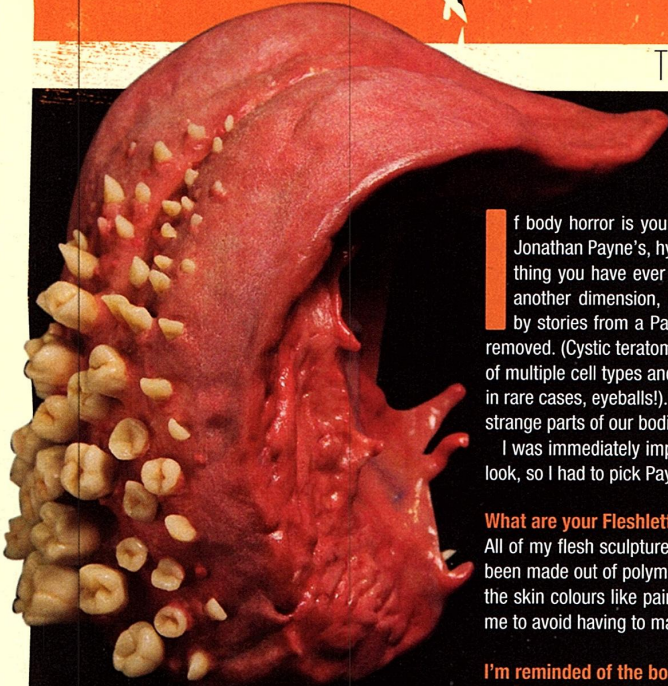
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THE FRIGHT GALLERY

CURATED BY GARY PULLIN

THIS MONTH: JONATHAN PAYNE'S FLESHLETTES



If body horror is your cup of gruel, you'll want to feast your eyes on Jonathan Payne's, hyper-realistic abominations, which are unlike anything you have ever seen. Called Fleshlettes, they're seemingly from another dimension, but the bizarre creations were actually inspired by stories from a Payne family member who had a teratoma tumor removed. (Cystic teratoma are germ cell tumours commonly composed of multiple cell types and are known to contain hair, bone, teeth and, in rare cases, eyeballs!). They're also meant to celebrate the ugly or strange parts of our bodies.

I was immediately impressed with how realistic and alive they look, so I had to pick Payne's brain about his process:

What are your Fleshlettes made of?

All of my flesh sculptures – up to this point – have been made out of polymer clay. It allows me to mix the skin colours like paint as I sculpt, and it allows me to avoid having to make a mould or castings.

I'm reminded of the body horrors of Cronenberg and the cult film *Society* [see p.30] by Brian Yuzna.

This is the first time I've heard of *Society* but I'm curious to find out more. There is definitely an unintentional creature DNA shared with Cronenberg.

Were you inspired by any special effects artists or fine-artists while you were designing and creating the Fleshlettes?

The two strongest artistic influences while creating the Fleshlettes came from Chris Cunningham's Rubber Johnny and the sculptures of Ron Mueck.

What kind of responses do you get to the work?

They always seem to elicit an uncomfortable laugh in a person. I'm happy that people find them approachable but strange and unsettling. I think that's perfect!

What does one of your pieces sell for?

They all vary greatly depending on size and complexity and they are all original sculptures. They range from \$70 for the smallest Fleshlettes all the way up to \$2500 for the largest pieces.

Why do you think people are so transfixed by the grotesque?

I think we find grotesque objects so interesting because they mirror feelings we have about our own bodies. Everybody has something about their physical self they find repulsive.

For more on Jonathan Payne's incredible Fleshlettes, check out paynesculptures.com 🧐

Florida Pre-Clovis site is now oldest known in southeastern United States

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Florida Pre-Clovis site is now oldest known in southeastern United States

Posted on May 16, 2016



The discovery of stone tools alongside mastodon bones in a Florida river shows that humans settled the southeastern United States as much as 1,500 years earlier than scientists previously believed, according to a research team led by a Florida State University professor.

This site on the Aucilla River — about 45 minutes from Tallahassee — is now the oldest known site of human life in the southeastern United States. It dates back 14,550 years.

"This is a big deal," said Florida State University Assistant Professor of Anthropology Jessi Halligan. "There were people here. So how did they live? This has opened up a whole new line of inquiry for us as scientists as we try to understand the settlement of the Americas."

There is a cluster of sites all over North America that date to around 13,200 years old, but there are only about five in all of North and South America that are older.

Halligan's research was published in the journal *Science Advances*.

Halligan and her colleagues, including Michael Waters from Texas A&M University and Daniel Fisher from University of Michigan, excavated what's called the Page-Ladson site, which is located about 30 feet underwater in a sinkhole in the Aucilla River. The site was named after Buddy Page, a diver who first brought the site to the attention of archaeologists in the 1980s, and the Ladson family, which owns the property.

In the 1980s and 1990s, researchers James Dunbar and David Webb investigated the site and retrieved several stone tools and a mastodon tusk with cut marks from a tool in a layer more than 14,000 years old. However, the findings received little attention because they were considered too old to be real and questionable because they were found underwater.

Worth another look

Waters and Halligan, who is a diver, had maintained an interest in the site and believed that it was worth another look. Between 2012 and 2014, divers, including Dunbar, excavated stone tools and bones of extinct animals.

They found a biface — a knife with sharp edges on both sides that is used for cutting and butchering animals — as well as other tools. Daniel Fisher, a vertebrate palaeontologist at the University of Michigan also took another look at the mastodon tusk that Dunbar had retrieved during the earlier excavations and found it displayed obvious signs of cutting created to remove the tusk from the skull.

The tusk may have been removed to gain access to edible tissue at its base, Fisher said.

“Each tusk this size would have had more than 15 pounds of tender, nutritious tissue in its pulp cavity, and that would certainly have been of value,” he said.

Another possible reason to extract a tusk is that ancient humans who lived in this same area are known to have used ivory to make weapons, he added.

Using the latest radiocarbon dating techniques, researchers found all artefacts dated about 14,550 years ago. Prior to this discovery, scientists believed a group of people called Clovis — considered among the first inhabitants of the Americas —settled the area about 13,200 years ago.

“The new discoveries at Page-Ladson show that people were living in the Gulf Coast area much earlier than believed,” said Waters, director of Texas A&M’s Center for the Study of the First Americans.

Added Halligan: *“It’s pretty exciting. We thought we knew the answers to how and when we got here, but now the story is changing.”*

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Hauntingly PENNSYLVANIA

Flying Snake of the Allegheny River

It was probably a pretty typical summer day for Jackson Miller and Harold Boynton. As they camped along the Oil Creek on August 1, 1906 they likely expected many things - hot days, sticky nights, and Pennsylvania's famous mosquitoes. What they did not expect to see was a huge snake - with wings - making its way down the creek. But they did see it and they told people. No one took them seriously. Until...

Almost two months later on September 29th Miss Rachel Talbot - daughter of book publisher W. A. Talbot - was standing on the bank of the Allegheny River near the family's summer home in Grunderville, Warren County when she saw a large winged snake swimming down the middle of the waterway. Sometimes its head rose out of the water several feet; sometimes the creature swam completely submerged. Though rattlesnakes often swam the Allegheny River, this was no rattler - all eye witnesses agreed on that.

Miss Talbot called out to a ferryman who, without hesitation, drew a rifle and began firing. He shot the creature in one wing whereupon it began hissing and spitting a forked tongue in his direction.

Soon two Warren Lumber Company employees joined in the lopsided gunfight and eventually the creature's other wing was pierced. Still, this did not prevent this great flying snake from leaping out of the water in an attempt to escape over a 20-foot high cable. Although the jump was unsuccessful, the creature did eventually evade the gunfire and make its way back down the river.

Hauntingly PENNSYLVANIA™ found no further reports of this great flying snake of the Allegheny River, but the story was dramatic enough that even an Alaskan newspaper ran the article.

If these sightings were a case of mis-identification no one stepped forward to suggest a correction or alternate explanation.

Coincidentally, the appearance of the swimming, flying snake comes within a few years of the great Pennsylvania "snake epidemic" [see separate story] although no snakes capable of flight were found during Hauntingly PENNSYLVANIA's research on this unusual period in the state's history.

If readers know of other reported sightings of the Flying Snake of the Allegheny River, contact us.

Include the source of the report, date and location of sighting and any other pertinent details.

TOPICS:

Flying Snake, Allegheny River, Pennsylvania, Rachel Talbot, cryptid, Harold Boynton, Jackson Miller

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The forgotten 200-year-old pub discovered under a Northern Quarter building site

15:55, 21 Apr 2016 Updated 09:13, 22 Apr 2016 By Katie Butler

manchestereveningnews.co.uk



Archaeologist Rosie Banens with a full bottle of alcohol found on the site

A 200-year-old underground pub has been discovered in Manchester city centre - along with bottles of brandy.

Archaeologists made the discovery of untouched bottles of booze and personalised crockery containing the former landlord's name.

The find came during work to prepare for the building of a 13-storey

skyscraper on the corner of Port Street and Great Ancoats Street.

As part of the planning process, archaeologists had to be brought in to dig underneath the proposed site. They discovered the hidden pub and as well as the remains of several houses.

Personalised plates of the landlord Thomas Evans - who owned the Astley Arms pub in 1821 - were recovered alongside including keys, pots for quills and pipes.



Some of the finds on the building site: From left, a stoneware bottle from J Moorhouse & Co, Hulme; a crockery set bearing the name of the Astley Arms and its first landlord, Thomas Evans; a glass bottle with the logo of a workman's arm

Some of the finds on the building site: From left, a stoneware bottle from J Moorhouse & Co, Hulme; a crockery set bearing the name of the Astley Arms and its first landlord, Thomas Evans; a glass bottle with the logo of a workman's arm

Builders say they are stunned to discover the buildings dating back to the early 1800s, just a few years after Napoleon's forces had swept Europe and when Manchester was still a modest market town.

James Alderson, site developer of Mulbury City which is carrying out the build, told the M.E.N.: "A lot of bottles have been found, maybe around 20. And three or four of them are full of brandy.

"We opened the cork on a few and you can still smell it.

"It's amazing knowing there's so much history at this site and it's really exciting.

"I never expected this kind of thing to be found but we are really fascinated by it all.



Watch Amazing Victorian pub discovery

"Part of Manchester's vast history is being captured in these findings which is really interesting."

"It really takes you back to the time when they would have been outside of the pub drinking."

Historians say The Astley Arms pub was renamed to the Paganini Tavern in 1840 by Thomas Inglesent.

By the 1850s it was back as the Astley Arms, remaining open until 1928 as a Cornbrook house.

The building was partially rebuilt in 1986 but later demolished.



... a glass milk bottle marked 'Ardwick', a porcelain sink unearthed on the dig, and a glass bottle from 'John Dyson, Clayton'

... a glass milk bottle marked 'Ardwick', a porcelain sink unearthed on the dig, and a glass bottle from 'John Dyson, Clayton'

Aidan Turner, supervisor at the site and senior archeologist, said it was exciting to be able to link the findings to living people today.

He said: "We found pottery and bottle from the Astley Arms which actually has the name of the proprietor Thomas Evans, and the name of the pub written on it, so it must have been a

commissioned piece for the pub.

"It's brilliant because you can suddenly connect it to the local people in the area. We looked online about his family history and one of his descendants now lives in Texas.

The foundations of an old bank vault and the pub found on the site on the corner of Port Street and Great Ancoats Street

"It's nice to be able to connect it directly to living people and their families."

He said pottery dated back to the early 1800s and several of the bottles would have been later towards the 1900s.



The foundations of an old bank vault and the pub found on the site on the corner of Port Street and Great Ancoats Street

The development will create 135 apartments and shops on the site just at the junction of Great Ancoats Street and Port Street.

It is expected to be finished by the end of 2017.

Some of the items recovered from the site will be put on display in the Museum of Science and Industry. But it's not yet known what will happen to the bottled brandy...

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Forgotten graves of notable Indianapolis people

Will Higgins, will.higgins@indystar.com

indystar.com

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Vonnegut

Alice Vonnegut, who would marry Jim Adams and become Alice Adams. With brothers Bernard Vonnegut (left) and Kurt Vonnegut (center). (Photo: Vonnegut family archives)

Memorial Day, which is Monday, May 25, is earmarked as a time to remember the dead, particularly the war dead but everyone else, too. Cemeteries are busy places on Memorial Day. Here are brief synopses of the unusually interesting occupants of 17 graves in cemeteries in and around Indianapolis.

Alice V. Adams (1917-1958), Crown Hill Cemetery, 700 W. 38th St., Sec. 66, Lot 453.

The V is for Vonnegut. She was the writer Kurt Vonnegut's sister. More than that, she was his muse. She was tall and beautiful, and she got jokes. She died of cancer two days after her husband was killed in a train wreck.

Here's from Vonnegut's 1976 novel "Slapstick": "The museums in children's minds, I think, automatically empty themselves in times of utmost horror — to protect the children from eternal grief. For my own part, though: It would have been catastrophe if I had forgotten my sister at once. I had never told her so, but she was the person I had always written for. She was the secret of whatever artistic unity I had ever achieved. She was the secret of my technique."



(Photo: The Star file photo)

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In the 1960s, Dick the Bruiser was one of professional wrestling's biggest attractions.

William "Dick the Bruiser" Afflis (1929-1991), Washington Park North Cemetery, 2702 Kessler Blvd W. Drive, Garden of Resurrection mausoleum, Sec. A, Crypt 77 D, Level 4.

He was a nationally known professional wrestler during the 1960s and 1970s and dominated the Indianapolis wrestling market with his tough-guy scowl and gravelly voice. Although pro wrestling was theatrical, the Bruiser's voice was authentic — the result of a football injury to his larynx. In the 1950s Afflis played four seasons for the Green Bay Packers. He was 62 when he died, in Largo, Fla., of internal bleeding. He had been at his winter home with wife Louise, lifting weights, when a blood vessel in his esophagus ruptured.

Francis Hillman "Scrapper" Blackwell (1903-1962) New Crown Cemetery, 2101 Churchman Ave., Sec. 20, Row 8, Lot 26.

He was a guitar hero in the clubs along Indiana Avenue who, with the piano player Leroy Carr, had some nationwide hits, such as "Blues Before Sunrise." The duo's "Naptown Blues" (1929) popularized a term that would later haunt Indianapolis, but its creators obviously meant no disrespect. Consider the lyrics: "When you get to Naptown, the blues won't last very long. Because they have their pleasure, and they sure do carry on."

Blackwell quit music after Carr's early death in 1935, and when Blackwell died, in 1962, The Indianapolis Star notice read simply: "Francis Blackwell, 1116 North Capitol Avenue, was found shot in the chest in the alley at the rear of 527 West 17th Street."



(Photo: Duncan Schiedt)

Francis "Scrapper" Blackwell, famed blues guitarist from Indianapolis, during his short-lived comeback career in Indianapolis in 1960. Two years later he was shot dead.

Wilbur Brink (1919-1931), Crown Hill Cemetery, 700 W. 38th St., Sec. 70, Lot 1062.

Brink is the only person to die as the result of an auto racing accident at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway while not on the IMS grounds. He was 12 years old, playing in his front yard at 2316 Georgetown Road when,

on lap 162, a wheel came loose from the race car driven by defending 500 champion Billy Arnold as Arnold crashed in Turn Four. The wheel bounded across the road, struck Brink and

killed him. Arnold and his riding mechanic, Spider Matlock, were injured but not seriously.

A few years ago Brink's death became the subject of a song written and performed by a Belgian pop band, "Bad Luck for Wilbur Brink."

Ernest F. Eppen (1914-2006), Crown Hill Cemetery, Sec. 46B, Lot 538.

You know that Speedway tradition of residents allowing race fans to park their cars in their yards for, like, \$10? The Eppen family, which owned property on Georgetown Road even before there was an Indianapolis 500 Mile Race, may well have started it. And Ernest Eppen was surely the dean of it.

The Eppens started parking cars for the 1919 race — the 500 was in its eighth year, Ernest Eppen was in his fifth. He continued the practice until 2003.

Throughout his long life, Eppen never attended the race or even the time trials. "That was a time to work," he said in a 1995 interview with The Star. "We needed the money. Prosperity — there wasn't too much up and down the street. We could hear the racing cars, but mostly we were too busy working."



(Photo: Karen Ducey/Indianapolis Star)

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Ernie Eppen and wife Ruth sit on their front porch on Georgetown Road in 2003. The Eppens may have begun the Speedway tradition of parking race fans' cars on their front lawns.

Frances Farmer (1913-1970), Oak Lawn Memorial Gardens, 9700 Allisonville Road, Fishers, Our Lady of Miraculous Medal Chapel mausoleum, first level.

She was the "golden-bright Seattle high school girl" (New York Times) who became a movie star in the 1930s but whose unstable, tempestuous behavior landed her in an insane asylum where she may have been lobotomized.

She has since become a cult hero. Jessica Lange starred in a movie about her. Kurt Cobain wrote and performed a song about her. She ended up in Indianapolis, where she hosted an afternoon movie at a local TV station and interviewed celebrities passing through town. She died here at age 57.

Albertina Forrest's tombstone in Crown Hill Cemetery.

Albertina Forrest (1870-1904), Crown Hill Cemetery, Sec. 25, Lot 230.

Hers is the cemetery's most forlorn grave marker and one of the fancier ones, too, with its



(Photo: File photo)

Ionic columns, cornice of granite, broad steps — basically it's a mini-Greek temple. A "perpetual mourner" is prostrate on its altar.

Forrest died at 31. She had taught at Butler and written a treatise called "The Cry, 'Back to Christ': Its Implication."

Her husband built the monument, indicating he was seriously torn up. He later remarried, but when he died, in 1930, he was buried next to Albertina in a grave that remains unmarked.

Robert Gay (died March 1863), Crown Hill Cemetery, Sec. 10, Lot 697.

Gay was a Civil War soldier sentenced to death for being a deserter. A firing squad did the job in Indianapolis as Gay sat upon his own coffin and sort of braced himself. Moments earlier he had given a short speech that ended with instructions to the firing squad: "To you who will fire at me I would say, take your aim well. Fire at my breast; (laying his hand with cap in it on his heart;) that is the place. Hold on the spot firmly. I want to die quickly. Don't let me suffer. Hold steady on the spot, and shoot at my breast." The Indianapolis Journal described in detail the execution. It's a must read.



(Photo: Doug McSchooler/Indianapolis Star)

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The grave marker of Robert Gay in Crown Hill Cemetery.

Archie Greathouse (died 1936), Crown Hill Cemetery, Sec. 37, Lot 809.

He was an early 20th century African-American business and civic leader from Indianapolis who owned the Greathouse Emporium bar on Indiana Avenue. In the 1920s, Greathouse sued to stop the racial separation that was being pushed by the

leaders of Indianapolis' public schools. Greathouse and others wrote to the school board that "no one section of the population can be isolated and segregated without taking from it the advantage of the common culture."

Greathouse's lawsuit failed, and in 1927 the city's black high school students were forced out of the schools they had been attending and into the brand new, all-black Crispus Attucks High School.

At a time when the KKK dominated Indianapolis politics, Archie Greathouse sued to prevent racial segregation. He lost.

Leon Johnson (1939-1999), Floral Park Cemetery, Faith Sec., Lot 128, Grave 3.



(Photo: Indiana Historical Society)

An Indianapolis Westsider, he was a prolific bank robber during the 1960s and '70s. He was the younger brother of Morris Lynn Johnson, the city's greatest bankrobber (Dillinger included).

His daughter, Leah Perryman, in a Star interview a week after her father's death, recalled being in Florida with her father and uncle in the late 1960s, waiting in their trailer until the men came home from one of their missions, laden with cash money. Leah was 12.

"We was all sitting around the floor, in a circle, you know, and we had this huge pile of money in the middle. And we was counting it up, you know, and stacking it up and putting it in paper bags. We filled 10 paper bags. I remember my hands getting all dirty and grimy from it." Leah said. "My dad was so smart. He could do anything."

On top of all that Johnson at one point had a pet monkey that rode on his shoulders as he drove.

Josephine Jones (died 1865), Crown Hill Cemetery, Sec. 4, Lot 89.

She was the first African-American buried in Crown Hill. She was the daughter of one of the cemetery's grave diggers. Nearly 150 years later her grave is still unmarked. There is no headstone. Nothing more is known about her, not even her birth date.



(Photo: File photo)

H. Joe Letterman (father of David Letterman, died 1973).

H. Joe Letterman (1915-1973), Crown Hill Cemetery, Sec 46, Lot 117.

David Letterman's father, who had a florist shop at 56th and Keystone, died of a heart attack at 57. His son was 27. The H. stands for Harry, which is the name David Letterman gave his son. David Letterman once told a writer for Esquire that his father was "the circus." "He was the show. When he walked through a room the lamps would rattle."

Jimmy McClure, the great table tennis champion who lived most of his life in Indianapolis.

Jimmy McClure (1917-2005), Crown Hill, Section 212 Lot 762.

Table tennis world doubles champion 1936-38; U.S. singles champion 1934, 1939; later, through the 1970s, he operated a shop in Broad Ripple that sold tennis equipment.



(Photo: File photo)

When McClure died, fan Berndt Mann of Columbus, Ohio, wrote this poem about him: "Many times I've watched with deep delight/Those grainy films in black and white/Delighting in the legend's play/I watched them once again last night/Will watch them still again today/But this time watch with joy and grief,/With joy, still marveling at his play/With grief, now knowing Death the thief/Has stolen the Legend McClure away."



(Photo: Joe Young/Indianapolis Star)

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Isaac "Tuffy" Mitchell has a smoke after pleading guilty to six counts of tax fraud. Lifetime, Mitchell had 40 arrests and nine convictions.

Isaac "Tuffy" Mitchell (1913-1970), B'nai Torah Cemetery, 2455 S. West Street, Row J, Grave 29.

During a crime career that likely lasted five decades, the Russian-born numbers kingpin was arrested 40 times, mostly on gaming charges, and convicted nine

times.

He was 5-1 and weighed 130 pounds. He got his nickname while he was an amateur boxer. He was free on bond in 1970 when he fell over dead of a heart attack while shooting pool at 2:30 a.m. at the Happy Landing Tavern in Ravenswood. He had \$802 in his pockets. In his '69 Buick were found 10 "4 play poker" games, a pool cue, some billiard chalk, two radios, a 20-piece dinnerware set, some false teeth marked "Tuff" and four Bibles.

Four hundred people attended his funeral.



(Photo: Indianapolis Star)

Buy Photo

Avriel Shull, 1951, at her wedding. Her husband was the newspaperman R.K. Shull.

Avriel Shull (1931-1976), Crown Hill Cemetery, mausoleum, NICH 47-D.

She was not an architect, but that didn't stop her from designing radical and beautiful mid-century modern houses with flat, overhanging roofs, vaulted ceilings and lots of glass and fieldstone. Shull left her biggest imprint in Carmel in the Thornhurst neighborhood, a few blocks west of Carmel's Downtown. More than a dozen of her houses can be found there.

Contact Star reporter Will Higgins at (317) 444-6043. Follow him on Twitter @WillRHiggins.

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Posted on April 28, 2015 By Chad Abramovich



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Most people my age aren't likely to recall Frontier Town, a once prominent destination turned ghost town in the woods of tiny North Hudson, New York,

but there are plenty of people who will tell you that it used to be great, and once integral to the once-thriving Adirondack tourism heyday of the mid 20th century.

I've mentioned Frontier Town before in an earlier blog entry, but never truly got around to exploring it until recently. Frontier Town is a massive place, it's kitschy ruins stretch unassumingly from the roadsides of Routes 9 and 84, and far back out of sight on the sprawling property at the bottom of shady hollows and a myriad of cold swamps that pulse with mosquitoes in the summers. Because the property is so large, it's very difficult to get a good idea of just how much there is to see, until you start exploring for yourself. It's taken me 3 trips to see a good deal of it, and I still feel like I've been unprepared with every visit.

My trips started back in 2012, which were focused on the assortment of abandoned motels and cabins lining Route 9 that once served the motel, and slowly, I would move inwards.

In 1951, Arthur Bensen, a Staten Island entrepreneur who installed telephones for a living, toured the northeast with \$40,000, to find a location suitable for building his dream project which would be far more ambitious than his current profession; an amusement park. 267 wooded acres in North Hudson would seal the deal, and despite having no construction skills and no real income after purchasing the property, he went to work. He was known for his amiable personality, someone who was convincing and charismatic, and got many North Hudson locals on board with helping him build the theme park, despite some of them thinking that both him and his idea was crazy. But his tenaciousness and optimism paid off, as his dream began to take shape. Using his 1951 Chevy, he would drag timber behind his car to build many of the log cabins around the site that still stand today.

Bensen was also known to be a quick thinker and good at improvisation – and it was these skills that ultimately would shape the park so many would come to love. His original vision was to build a Pioneer Village, but shortly before opening, the appropriate costumes for his employees never arrived. So, Bensen made a trip down to New York City to purchase some, and returned with Cowboy and Indian costumes instead, which were the only ones he could buy in such a short notice. But he wasn't worried, and with a little creative re-imagining, Frontier Town was born, officially opening on July 4, 1952.



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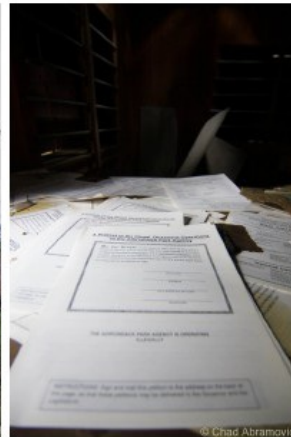
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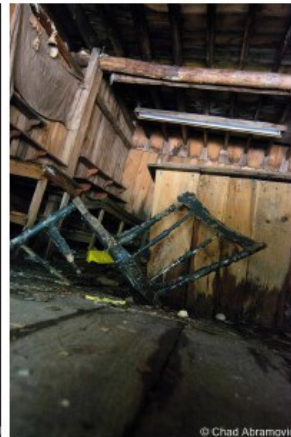
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He soon constructed Prairie Junction to keep with his new theme, which was modeled after your stereotypical Main Street of a dirty wild west town. The low rise wooden buildings were all connected by a broad wooden porch, consisting of a saloon, music hall and a shop selling Western themed clothing. A rodeo area was built nearby, which held two of them a day would allow children to participate. Stagecoaches, trains, tracks and covered wagons would all transport visitors around the park, and outlaws on horseback would rob the trains and engage in shoot-outs.

Frontier Town wasn't just loved by the tourists and generations of wide eyed kids who made memories there. It was also loved by the locals. The park employed many Adirondack area teens, who spent their paychecks on college tuition. Many friendships and romances were also forged here, some which would last life long, and would later be recalled wistfully on Frontier Town message boards and fan-sites that pop up on Google searches about the place.

Employees wore period costumes, and would teach bemused onlookers how to churn butter, demonstrate how yarn was spun, or cook pea soup in an iron kettle over a fireplace, which was said to be a favorite of loggers in the Adirondacks.

The park would come to it's peak popularity in the 1960s and 70s and then would enter an inevitable period of decline. The times were changing. The construction of the Adirondack Northway would lure traffic to bypass North Hudson and cut travel time dramatically. Now, travelers no longer needed to depend on Route 9 to get to the Adirondacks from New York City. Some speculate that the park really declined when a new transgressive era ushered in parents becoming uneasy with their kids playing with guns, which was more acceptable when Westerns were all the craze on TV and the silver screen. As one Frontier Town enthusiast wrote on a comment thread; "Cowboys and Indians were big time. Every kid had a gun and a cowboy hat". Others blame broader travel opportunities that came with the construction of interstate highways and air travel, making places like Frontier Town obsolete.

In 1983, Art Benson sold Frontier Town to another development firm, and would pass away 5 years later. The park was closed until 1989, re-opening with additions, such as a miniature golf course. In 1998, Frontier Town closed for good due to failing finances and weak attendance. The property was seized in August 2004 by the county for past-due property taxes. The stagecoaches, trains, buggies and the tracks were all ripped out and sold, as well as other paraphernalia. Collectors can still find mementos at Gokey's Trading Post just down the road, which is where a lot of Frontier Town relics ended up during the massive auction after the park's closing.

Today, awkward and fantastical ruins falling apart in silence underneath the Pines are all that remains of Frontier Town. A walk around the property reveals the tragic process of decay and entropy which is sad and breathtaking to behold, as you reflect on society's impermanence.

I visited during the dark wintery cold of January, and returned during a far more pleasant 50 degree April Sunday, so my photos are a mixture of winter and early spring shots.

When I took my research to the internet, I found a cool Facebook page, Frontier Town Abandoned Theme Park Now And Then, with tons of great old photos to gaze at. It's incredible what the transformative power of nature can do to a place in a short time.

Frontier Town in it's Postcard Prime



Frontier Town, 2015



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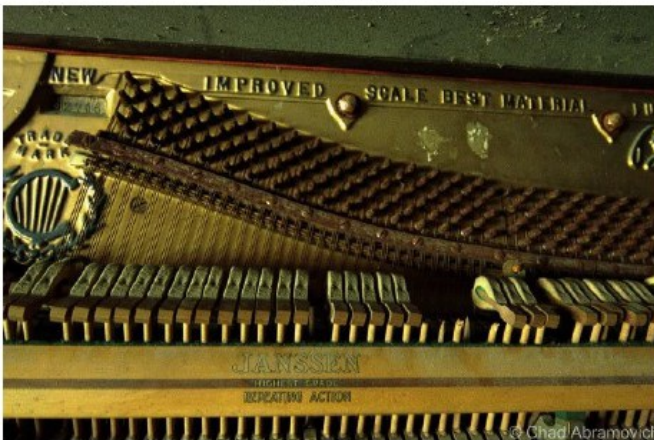
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Joining me for my adventure was my friend Bill Alexander, creator of Vermont.com, who filmed our walk around the grounds. Check out his write up and video below!

Return, Summer 2015



DSC_0299_pe



DSC_0308_pe

As much as I openly complain about Facebook, and how I find social media more unnourishing and exhausting for me, I have to admit that it's also been a huge boon in terms of networking and keeping this blog's momentum in a direction that's not backwards. Making friends when your an adult is a hard



DSC_0314_pe

gig. Thankfully, I was able to network with and befriend other explorers over Facebook who dwell all over the east coast. Eventually, we started to organize meet ups with willing participants. In June, 2015, I would meet two cars worth of previously virtual photographer and explorer friends, and Frontier Town was one of our stops on a full day excursion. But, a day of exploring before we arrived in North Hudson had drained my camera batteries, so I only was able to get a few pictures under the coolness of a soft summer evening.

35 Comments on "Frontier Town"

1. Bill Alexander
April 28, 2015

A totally surreal experience. A sad legacy for this formerly popular family destination.

2. Terry Powers



DSC_0317_pe

April 28, 2015

I went to Frontier Town back in the late sixties. The pictures brought back many good memories.

3. sariberry

April 28, 2015

Started singing their song while reading this. "Frontier Town the great American adventure"

4. sarahvermont (@sarahsvermont)

April 29, 2015

By chance, I drove by the "old" Frontier Town today and then found your informative blog post. Perfect timing! Thank you – great photos and posting.

5. jethomp

April 29, 2015

Remember it well. The last trip I took there I got stung in the eye and my finger slammed in a car door. Still, I remember it pretty fondly. Much more so than other, similar, attractions in the area.

Another most excellent story sir.



DSC_0324_pe

6. Roger Doyle

April 29, 2015

I remember visiting with my parents and my brother in 1966. What fun it was!

7. Bonnie Bendschneider

April 29, 2015

Our family visited over 50 years ago. Still remember the fun, mostly the train ride. So sad that families today cannot experience it.



DSC_0326_pe

8. Susan Duell

April 29, 2015

So sad to see what has become of this place. I went there many times in the 60's and 70's as a child. So lucky to have been able to take my children to experience the old west before it closed for good. Brought back many fond memories watching through my kids eyes. An adventure in a day. The train ride through the park, getting held up by robbers (bad guys) on the stagecoach, getting attacked by indians, a shoot out on Main Street, having my kids become honorary deputys to help the sheriff catch the bad guys, having them sent to jail, dunked in the pond or put in the gallows and have their picture put on a wanted poster if they were the bad guy. They got to ride the horses, watch the rodeo, watch the cowboys play poker in the saloon, they saw an indian



DSC_0329_pe

show and live black bears. It was a great fun adventure for me and my kids. I wish they had more places like this now. Not to show the violence but the history of what once was.

9. Rachel Lynne Putvain
April 30, 2015

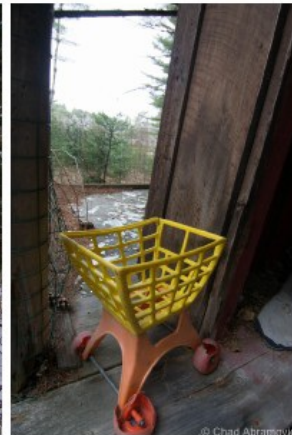
miss it know i loved it as a kid

10. Douglas Allen
April 30, 2015

i used to work there as a young kid. most of my relatives worked there. my uncle andy was the pony express rider, my uncle jim was jim dalton, my uncle ross drove stagecoach my cousins russel , ronnie, steve and my aunt mary were all helpers in the stables duncking pool etc. and sometime played the train and stagecoach robbers. ill remember that place as long as i live. really fond memories.



DSC_0338_pe



DSC_0344_pe

11. Mary Clark
April 30, 2015

I was there many times as a child the schools would take the younger school grades there. This was a very nice place for family time also.

12. Laurie J Williams
April 30, 2015

wow I have passed by so many times and wondered about it... why had my parents not taken me there? what is going on with the place

etc... That is tragic I would so love to take my kids to a place like that

13. Scott Rougia
May 1, 2015

Great blog!!! I am a photographer and loved seeing the photos. I used to go there with my family. I would love to walk through and take some photos. Totally jealous! Lol.

14. Lesley Ferguson
May 1, 2015



DSC_0346_pe

© Chad Abramovich

I loved "Frontier Town" back in the 60's, especially the "jail" with the sign that read "Don't Feed The Varmits", and the stagecoach rides and being "held up" by the bad guys. So much fun! I have an old home movie (now on DVR) of a day spent there with some cousins. I too was lucky enough to take my own children there in the 80's, although I doubt they would remember that. "Cowboys and Indians" wasn't their thing like it was ours! Thanks for the memories I had forgotten.

15. Susan Clickner

May 1, 2015



DSC_0353_pe

© Chad Abramovich

I have always wanted to bring my kids for a walk-through as we travel the Northway. I visited Frontier Town many times as a kid – it was amazing and these types of experiences are few and far between for today's kids. (Looks like I won't get in trouble, which I was afraid of.)

16. William Turcotte

May 1, 2015

We came when I was a kid. I remember the stage coach "hold up" and my mother makes sure to remind anyone that will listen that I pointed out to the robber that while I had no money, she did LOL

17. Campus News Writer

May 1, 2015



DSC_0407_pe

© Chad Abramovich

I always remembered vaguely going to this place around age 4 or so. I loved cap pistols and remember the shootouts. I also remember there were beds of some sort, some kind of hostel. Am I wrong?

18. Tedi Toca

May 1, 2015

Wonderful story and photos. So sad that it had to close, but thousands of us have some nice memories.

• Judith Lawyer

May 3, 2015

I went there as a young girl with my brother and sister on a family outing. It was a great time and exciting since we watched a lot of Gunsmoke, Bonanza, Rawhide, Lone Ranger, and I even went to Madison Square Garden and shook hands with Roy Rogers at a show



DSC_0369_pe

© Chad Abramovich



DSC_0370_pe

© Chad Abramovich



DSC_0377_pe

© Chad Abramovich

where he was entertaining with the Dale Evans and the Sons of the Pioneers. So going to Frontier Town was exciting for us. Who owns the land now where Frontier Town's buildings remain?

19. Dianne Martineau

May 2, 2015

We went every year, when I was young, One of my great memorys, was, my sister saw a horse she use to ride at our local riding stables. Next thing we're being rob by the bandits, My Mom asked where my sister was, I didn't know. I said she saw Bell, the horses. Lmbo, then we here the bandits got robbed, his horse was misssing, guess who stole the horse my sister. They were caught right away and thanked my sister.

20. Wesley Baldwin

May 3, 2015

Our family went many times, but what I remember the most was the stage coach ride, when our mom told the robbers that my brother knew where the money chest was. It was funny to see my brother John explain his way out of that one. Many good memories.

21. John S Lynn

May 3, 2015

My grandmother 'Joyce Donaldson' was the seamstress/costume maker for Frontier Town. I grew up spending summers going to work with her and spending the day in the park. I fed the bears, helped with animals, was fascinated with the glass blowing and the grist mill. I remember once when I was staying at her house the Indian chief stopped by and I was horrified of him, I hid and wouldn't come out until he left. I had many wonderful times there. In the 80's Johnny Cash

gave a show at Frontier Town.

22. Shelley Fuchs

May 4, 2015

I loved frontier Town I took my kids there and was actually looking for it to take my grandchildren. It is so sad that they did not keep it up totally great experience. Loved it.

23. Harold Countryman

May 4, 2015



DSC_0380_pe

Back in the 50's my mother took us to Frontier Town. It seems to me it was below Saratoga, but this old memory is going south and has many holes like Frontier town has now. I remember the train holdup. That is about all.

24. paranormalpoppy

May 6, 2015

Scary experience

• shawna0630

May 10, 2015



DSC_0382_pe



DSC_0384_pe

Why was it a scary experience?

■ chadabramovich

May 10, 2015

I meant to ask the same question – but I'm afraid I got side tracked!

25. dmglstne

May 11, 2015

once again some fantastic work and great location. thanks for the post. would love to go someday

• Chad Abramovich

September 8, 2015

Thanks! I hope to meet up one day. Maybe soon?

26. Stavros

September 8, 2015



DSC_0413_pe



DSC_0418_pe

Hey Chad, a bunch of the images in this post appear to be missing? Just wanted you to know!

• Chad Abramovich

September 8, 2015

Oof. I had no idea. I'll investigate this – thanks for letting me know!

■ Stavros

September 8, 2015



DSC_0419_pe

Of course! I found a few typos while reading last night too, didn't know if you wanted me to point them out though! I'd be happy to when I have time later... I literally read every post you've ever written, they're great!!

■ Chad Abramovich
September 8, 2015

Oh geez, thanks man! That really means a lot. I try my best to avoid typos, but I tend to get a bit verbose and lost in my work, and sometimes wordpress editor isn't the most reliable tool to depend on haha. I'll have to comb through.



DSC_0422_pe

■ Stavros
September 8, 2015

I'll send you a Facebook message with the ones I noticed so you don't have a bunch of comments on here!

■ Chad Abramovich
September 8, 2015

lol if you insist. Thanks for the help, man. It's appreciated.



DSC_0423_pe



DSC_0424_pe

Obscure Vermont

Heat, fumes to blame for Battambang mass fainting

phnompenhpost.com



Thirty footwear factory workers fainted at the Aerosoft Summit Footwear factory in Battambang province yesterday due to poor ventilation, overwork and unusually

hot weather.

Sampov Loun district deputy chief Ly Rom said that 29 women and one man felt nauseous and had headaches before collapsing around lunchtime.

Police took the workers to the Sampov Loun Hospital, where their condition improved. "Some of [the workers] said that the weather was very hot," said Rom. "And some workers said that they worked an extra hour."

Some patients also said that the intense smell from the shoes made them feel worse.

"In the morning, we smelled a bad smell and the weather was very hot," said a worker anonymously from hospital yesterday. "I felt exhausted at the time."

Aerosoft could not be reached for comment yesterday. Last month, the Ministry of Labour urged the garment industry to take adequate health and safety measures to compensate for the unusually hot dry season.

Almost 80 garment workers fainted last month in incidents blamed on poor ventilation.

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MALAYSIAN PARLIAMENT

Rules cannot be eased yet for China visits

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed.

THE Government is unable as yet to relax the conditions imposed on Malaysians planning to visit China. Deputy Prime Minister Tun (Dr.) Ismail told the Dewan Rakyat today.

This is because we have no diplomatic relations with that country," he said.

Tun Ismail said this in his capacity as Minister of Home Affairs when replying to an oral question by MR. KEO TEOW CHYE (Pekin-Bukit Mertajam) who wanted to know if the Government would consider relaxing the conditions for such visits.

At present, Tun Ismail said, the Government would consider applications to visit China for medical reasons or for other reasons approved by the Government. However, if applications would have to satisfy the conditions imposed by the Chinese Government.

Consideration would be made according to the merits of each case.

"It is for this reason and also because we still have no diplomatic relations with China that we are unable to relax these conditions," he said.

MR. KEO TEOW CHYE (Pekin-Bukit Mertajam) then asked Tun Ismail if he approved Malaysians visiting China as tourists.

Tun Ismail replied this would be considered as soon as Malaysia had established diplomatic relations with Peking.

To an earlier question by Mr. Cheong Poon (DAP-Damansara), Tun Ismail said he was sure from China were brought in for schooling between May 1, 1972 and Oct. 31, 1972.

But this was cancelled and approved.

Other replies to questions by MR. KEO TEOW CHYE, said the change in office hours during the festive month, introduced from this year, was made in the interest of the staff and the public.

17 resignations

"But the Government has been good enough to talk to us on this matter which is under consideration," he said.

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But this was cancelled and approved.

Other replies to questions by MR. KEO TEOW CHYE, said the change in office hours during the festive month, introduced from this year, was made in the interest of the staff and the public.

Training in S'pore

AS FIRST CHOICE

TUN Abdul Razak said

Malaysia would always take advantage of

available training facilities for police and military personnel

from Singapore and neighbouring countries.

If not, they would be sent to other countries

where the training is considered suitable to Malaysia's needs.

He was replying to Mr. V. David (Pekin-Bukit Mertajam) who asked whether he would consider the exchange of police and military personnel for training with Singapore.

It was the third time since last Saturday that this happened to the employees of the United States of America in the factory in Boon Keng Road, Kallang Road.

Several employees interviewed yesterday said: "There is a general hysteria among women employees on the U-Board assembly line."

One of the women said: "It was frightening. The women went into a trance and started screaming."

Said another: "We did not take it seriously when about half the women began hysterical last Saturday."

For safety

"But it certainly gave cause for concern when another 13 became hysterical on Tuesday and about 28 today."

Later yesterday, the firm's personnel manager, Mr. Lee Song Kee, said: "The factory had a few instances of hysteria among its female employees."

"In the interest of the employees' safety, it was decided to shut down part of the factory for the remainder of the shift."

Asked what was the cause of the hysteria, he said: "No more comment."

Nominations to CCC

NOMINATIONS to the new 11-member management committee of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce will be accepted until Monday.

The chamber's election committee has these week received the results of the nominations. The results of the election will be announced on Feb. 11 at 10.00 a.m.

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FRANKIE HOWARD of the "CARRY ON" Series

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See & hear EATON KITT sing "A Knight for my Night"

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PLUS SUNDAY 9.00 a.m. MORNING SHOW
MORE DARING THAN "MYSTERIOUS AFRICA"

It took 5 years to produce this film working in 15 different countries, sometimes shooting in 16 mm. & having to hide from primitive people who were very jealous of their traditions. All scenes are authentic & taken on the spot as they occurred.

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See YOU COST "RETURN OF THE KINGS" (Color)

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Calls dismissed, then it sets conditions

VIETNAM SAYS 'NO' BUT...

Setback for bid to lift DC-10 ban

WASHINGTON, Wednesday

EFFORTS to lift the ban on DC-10 flights in the United States were undermined today by an announcement that have had turned up in the engine mountings of nine more aircraft.

Inspectors discovered the faults during checks ordered by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) after the Chicago DC-10 disaster last month in which 275 people died, the FAA announced.

Earlier, the DC-10's builders, McDonnell Douglas, called on the House of Representatives to end the ban on US DC-10 flights.

McDonnell Douglas official John Britten told the House that the structural faults had not caused the Chicago disaster, the worst in US aviation history.

He dismissed recent criticism of the aircraft as absurd and irresponsible.

No precedent

Another McDonnell Douglas official against the FAA's grounding will be heard on Monday by the National Transport Security Council in Washington.

The decision by most European airlines to resume DC-10 flights was dismissed today as "an irresponsible act without precedent in aviation history" by the US Airline Pilots' Association.

An FAA spokesman said any airline resuming DC-10 operations could be under international aviation agreements, overfly the United States, but not land there.

Hundreds of travellers flew to Israel and Spanish Mediterranean resorts yesterday aboard European-based DC-10s.

No decision

Others are to take European DC-10s to Asia, Africa and South America over the next few days.

In Tokyo, the Transport Ministry said it would not permit DC-10 flights to resume until FAA rescinded its grounding order.

In Singapore, an SIA spokesman said no decision as yet has been made by Singapore authorities to resume DC-10 flights.

A Department of Civil Aviation spokesman said that no application had been received by airlines operating here to allow their DC-10s to land at Paya Lebar airport.

Seismic said today that it had made such an application.

Third quake

GREENLAND, Wed. — There was a third earthquake in the area after the 2.0 quake in a 100 km radius around St. John's last night. But no one was injured and there were no damage. — AP.

Inside

ALLEGED CHEATING: MAN IS ARRESTED

— Page 7

1.5 MILLION is set to be sent to Australia.

POLICE that don't want to work.

IRAN may not get its oil.

CHINESE and Thais in bar.

PU tells commercial sector: Think again.

LOH tried to escape.

MO told his wife to change his mind, said his lawyer.

NEW Shylock blamed for wayward side.

Causeway

— Page 10

CHRONICLED COMICS

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BURN in Borneo

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The weather

TEMPERATURES

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See Page 2

Third quake

GREENLAND, Wed. — There was a third earthquake in the area after the 2.0 quake in a 100 km radius around St. John's last night. But no one was injured and there were no damage. — AP.

UNITED NATIONS, Wednesday

VIETNAM TODAY rejected calls to take part in a proposed international conference on Indo-Chinese refugees, dismissing it as "useless and unnecessary," but later issued conditions for its representation at such talks.

United Nations Secretary General Dr Kurt Waldheim was seeking Hanoi's views on a refugee conference proposed by British Prime Minister Mrs Margaret Thatcher and backed by a growing number of countries including the United States.

Problem identified

Under the proposal, the focus of the conference will be identifying Vietnam as the cause of the refugee problem and stopping the flow of refugees as a first step towards solving the overall refugee problem.

Vietnamese sources here quoted Hanoi's UN representative as telling Dr Waldheim that such a conference was "useless and unnecessary."

'WEAPON THEY USED TO OVERWHELM THE CITIES'

LONDON, Wed. — Prime Minister Mrs Margaret Thatcher said today that the present outflow of refugees from Vietnam was the result of the use of chemical weapons to overwhelm the cities of South Vietnam and Kampuchea.

She said the refugees were "the victims of the use of chemical weapons to overwhelm the cities of South Vietnam and Kampuchea."

Latest call

Radio Hanoi added that the government would not attend a conference unless it was held under the auspices of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

It said Hanoi will attend a conference only if it is held under the auspices of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

August talks

BEIJING (PEKING), Wed. — The meeting followed Australia's decision last month to limit its participation by the Asian airlines in low-fare flights between Australia and Europe, previously restricted to Garuda and British Airways.

The meeting ended at about midnight last night. The officials said the Asian airlines, Australia's Qantas and Hong Kong's Cathay Pacific agreed on low fares for special ad-hoc flights to Australia and Europe, and on a new airfare for individual travellers and the group incentive tour.

Rethink on fees hike

WELLINGTON, Wed. — The New Zealand Government is considering a charge on students who are not New Zealanders, but who are not from the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand.

The Minister of Education, Mr Murray Williamson, said the charge would be applied to students who are not from the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand.

Switch off...save watts...save money

SWITCH OFF...SAVE WATTS...SAVE MONEY



VIET FORCE MOVING TOWARDS BORDER

Thailand orders military alert

BANGKOK, Wednesday

MORE than 10,000 Vietnamese troops backed by tanks and artillery were reported today advancing towards the Thai border where Khmer Rouge soldiers and civilians have fled the war in Kampuchea, Thai military sources said.

Thai commanders immediately ordered troops on alert and sent armoured reinforcements to two threatened areas, the sources said.

It is feared the Vietnamese are planning an incursion to clear out more than 4,000 Khmer Rouge soldiers and civilians camped in the border area, they said.

One high-ranking source said any incursion by the Vietnamese, even if only aimed at the Khmer Rouge, would be resisted by Thai forces.

"We will fight to protect our territorial integrity," he said.

Two points

Other sources said the Vietnamese force amounting to a full division of about 10,000 men with tanks, heavy weapons and battlefields aircraft guns — was moving towards two points on the border.

Thai reinforcements included armoured elements of Thailand's 1st Cavalry Division, the sources said.

In one area, opposite Pong Nam Ray district 200km east of Bangkok, more than 4,000 Khmer Rouge soldiers and their followers are camped on the Thai side of the border.

ATTACK BID ON SUMMIT VENUE

A THAIEN truck (arrowed) driven by Japanese radicals rammed a police cordon and burst into flames in Tokyo on Tuesday just before the summit as a gathering of internationalists and right-wingers see it as a plot by Vietnam and the Khmer Rouge to assassinate the summit.

Police have been deployed at various strategic points in Tokyo where leaders of the seven nations will meet.

August talks

BEIJING (PEKING), Wed. — The meeting followed Australia's decision last month to limit its participation by the Asian airlines in low-fare flights between Australia and Europe, previously restricted to Garuda and British Airways.

The meeting ended at about midnight last night. The officials said the Asian airlines, Australia's Qantas and Hong Kong's Cathay Pacific agreed on low fares for special ad-hoc flights to Australia and Europe, and on a new airfare for individual travellers and the group incentive tour.

Cut in Aussie, Asean and HK air fares

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. — Air fares between Australia, Asean and Hong Kong are expected to be cut following an agreement reached between the airlines at a two-day meeting here, airline officials said.

The meeting ended at about midnight last night. The officials said the Asian airlines, Australia's Qantas and Hong Kong's Cathay Pacific agreed on low fares for special ad-hoc flights to Australia and Europe, and on a new airfare for individual travellers and the group incentive tour.

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From the heart of Asia.

CATHAY PACIFIC

SWITCH OFF...SAVE WATTS...SAVE MONEY

SEE PAGE 2 AND 6

Mr Lee gets briefing from Mrs T

By SEAN CHANG NEE

SEAN CHANG NEE

LONDON, Wed.

BRITISH Prime Minister Mrs Margaret Thatcher today explained to Mr Lee Kuan Yew about her government's new policies to navigate the country to a new economic direction and play a more active role in international affairs.

The two leaders met on a back street in Downing Street at noon today before Mrs Thatcher hosted a lunch for Mr Lee and senior Singapore officials.

The talks, the first of Mrs Thatcher's new economic thrust at home because of her government's plan to go to the forefront of the major policies of the former Labour Government.

New policy

The Prime Minister was accompanied by Mr Liam Chow, her secretary-general and secretary of state for the East of England.

Hours before they met, Mrs Thatcher's new economic thrust at home because of her government's plan to go to the forefront of the major policies of the former Labour Government.

MASS HYSTERIA AT FACTORY

AT LEAST 20 women workers were involved in mass hysteria last night at a factory in Hong Kong.

The factory is a subsidiary of General Electric (GE) factory in Hong Kong.

Some of them were sent to hospital while others were released after being given a company spokesman, while confirming the mass hysteria had been declared to give further details.

JOSHUA P. WARREN



- International TV Personality
- Heard on *Coast to Coast AM*
- Published by Simon & Schuster
- Host of *Speaking of Strange*
- President of Shadowbox Enterprises, LLC
- Owner of the Asheville Mystery Museum

BREAKING!

George Washington's Ghost?

This photograph was recently taken in a tavern, in Maryland, once frequented by President George Washington. After extensive analysis by Warren and his team, they believe it is authentic. Look at the dark figure on the left side of the image, apparently looking to his left (a profile) and walking out of the frame.

More technical details will be revealed soon.

The photo was taken by Lisa Moulden, author of the new book, [Presidential Souls](#).

You may click each image for a larger version. Be sure to also look at the enhancements below.



Below is an enhanced version, compared to an image of Washington:



IS WASHINGTON WEARING GLASSES? No. Even though Washington actually did wear glasses sometimes, the appearance of this apparition wearing glasses is an optical illusion created by the lighting fixture at the translucent edge of the ghost's face. You can see this in the above control image showing the entire fixture.

Hauntingly PENNSYLVANIA

Hauntingly PENNSYLVANIA™ is THE source for collected lore on Pennsylvania's haunted houses, ghosts, UFOs, mysterious creatures and shocking true crime stories. Our content results from original research of both historical sources and modern day reports.

Ghost in the Graveyard: It was the Only Thing this Civil War Veteran Feared
David Barge was born in Lancaster County in December 1838.

When he enrolled in the 1st Regiment of the Pennsylvania Light Artillery in September of 1861 he became part of a group of soldiers who saw some of the worst fighting of the Civil War. Among the bloody battles in which this regiment fought was the second Battle of Manassas where Barge himself was injured in 1862.

A young and brave man, Barge completed his term of duty and retired to Lawrence County (on the Ohio border) to take up farming.

We do not know if Barge was a church-goer before the war, but afterward he apparently attended the Savannah Methodist Episcopal Church several miles north of New Castle. One cool evening in November 1869 he arrived at the church to open it for a prayer meeting. He waited for attendees to arrive, but it soon became evident that no one was coming. As he turned to leave he caught sight of something that rattled the veteran so badly he leaped over the closed church gate and ran the entire one-mile journey home.

At first Barge did not speak of his encounter. Like most people he feared ridicule or the loss of the trust of his family and friends. Eventually, however, he recounted the tale of how he had been approached by something not human near the church cemetery - a hazy white figure that came from the graveyard.

Barge's 18-year-old nephew Eli Gaston believed his uncle's story to be silly fiction. So, the next night, Eli and his brother visited the church fully expecting nothing to happen. Like his uncle, however, Eli met the apparition - and both he and his brother sped home to confirm Barge's story.

Eli Gaston, being an obstinate sort, decided he would return to the church one more time - with a fourth witness. Like clockwork the ghost appeared, but they resisted the urge to flee. "What do you want?" one of them asked - but the apparition only groaned and glided to the

rear corner of the church where it stopped beside a small tree. From the tree the men heard scratching which they described as similar to the sound a cat makes when it sharpens its claws.

As the night went on the spirit would disappear from the cemetery only to reappear in an adjoining meadow. Back and forth it came and went with no sound - although the men could clearly hear their own footsteps in the frosted grass.

In response to the news of these strange experiences in the Savannah Methodist Episcopal Church graveyard, a crowd of locals carrying firearms and farm implements took up guard and waited for the ghostly visitor.

Perhaps the spirit was frightened by the size of the crowd or its weaponry. Perhaps it simply tired of the nightly visits. Whatever the reason, the ghost did not appear and has not been reported since.

David Barge died in May 1918 at the age of 80. Interestingly, rather than Savannah Church he chose Oak Park Cemetery as his final resting place. [Editor's note: there is a David Barge buried in the Savannah Methodist Episcopal Church graveyard, but he is not the subject of this piece.]

Barge's nephew Eli Gaston - who also died at age 80 - likewise chose Oak Park for his burial site.

We can only wonder if they were ever properly introduced to their "ghost in the graveyard" somewhere in the great beyond.

Affiliate Links - For Further Reading & Entertainment:

TOPICS:

Ghost, graveyard, New Castle, Lawrence County, Savannah Methodist Episcopal Church, David Barge, Eli Gaston, Dr. David P. Jackson, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania

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Does this spooky image show a GHOST peering from a psychiatric hospital?

express.co.uk

SUNDAY EXPRESS

sunday_express_logo

Does this spooky image show a GHOST peering from a psychiatric hospital?

WITH a shadowy figure lurking from a window, does this chilling image show a GHOSTLY face inside a derelict psychiatric hospital?

PUBLISHED: 12:06, Thu, Mar 31, 2016 | UPDATED: 12:38, Thu, Mar 31, 2016



ADAM SMITH/SWNS

Does this picture show a ghost lurking in the window of a psychiatric asylum?

The spooky snap appears to show a shadowy figure looking from the first-floor window of the former hospital - despite it being closed for more than 15 years.

The asylum in Bronllys, Brecon, Wales was also a PoW camp in the Second World War where captured German soldiers were

kept.

After the war it housed psychiatric patients who were sometimes lobotomised for conditions like postnatal depression, alcoholism and senile dementia.

I caught an epic shot of a ghost at the abandoned Brecon and Radnor Lunatic Asylum

Adam Smith

At least one patient is known to have died on the site from a pre-frontal lobotomy which saw part of the brain damaged by cracking open the skull and severing nerves.

The spooky image was taken by walker Adam Smith as he strolled past the outside of the crumbling, moss-covered building.

He said: "I caught an epic shot of a ghost at the abandoned Brecon and Radnor Lunatic Asylum.



ADAM SMITH/SWNS

A walker spotted the spooky figure whilst walking past the asylum

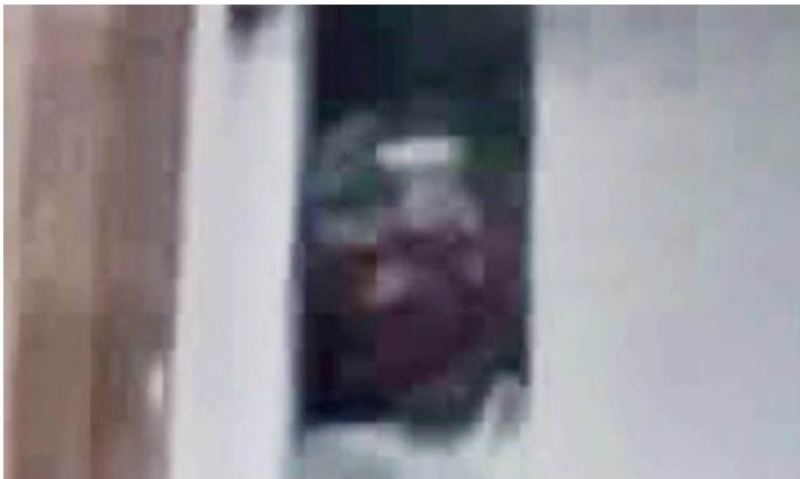
"Maybe it was a patient who had a lobotomy or perhaps a soldier patient from the war or maybe a Nazi prisoner.

"Whatever it was, it certainly gave me a fright."

At least one patient is said to have died from a pre-frontal lobotomy in the psychiatric hospital

He added: "Since I uploaded the post it went viral.

"I started to get messages from local residents and councillors asking me that I remove it because 100's of people were turning up at the hospital to try to find the ghost."



ADAM SMITH/SWNS

The building first opened in 1903

and was one of more than 100 'lunatic asylums' in Britain.

It had padded cells which were converted to prison cells during the war.

They were still visible in the 1990s and the site was fully closed by 1999.

6 Comments

(edited)9 days ago

1riverstyx

homless person

(edited)13 days ago

Duggan

It doesn't look like a face to me, more likely a reflection of something on the outside. In any case, if there are such things a spirits, why would they want to return to the place where they had spent a miserable time? I know I wouldn't - although I couldn't if I wanted to - my old senior school has been knocked down!!!

(edited)17 days ago

SarahEllis1

That is not a human, you can see through it! :l

(edited)17 days ago

45 /70

No it proves these places should have been kept open for all the psychotics looking at the photo and imagining they can see ghosts

(edited)17 days ago

poppy60

More likely some homeless person looking for shelter.

(edited)17 days ago

Cannon Street Kid

No.

News

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A Japanese woman found an enormous hornet crawling on her clothes

09:23 EST, 20 April 2016 |

dailymail.co.uk



By Chris Summers For Mailonline

A woman in Japan was shocked to find a giant insect crawling over one of the sweaters in her closet.

The beast in question was a giant Asian hornet (*Vespa mandarinia*), which is native to the mountains of Japan.

They are known to Japanese as *osuzumebachi* - or sparrow bee - and possess a powerful venom

that can dissolve human tissue.

Daily Mail

.com

MailOnline US - news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories



The Godzilla-sized insect, which was about three inches long, was spotted crawling along a green jumper on a clothes hanger.

Fortunately the creature did not sting the lady and she managed to dispose of it

outside without injury to either side.

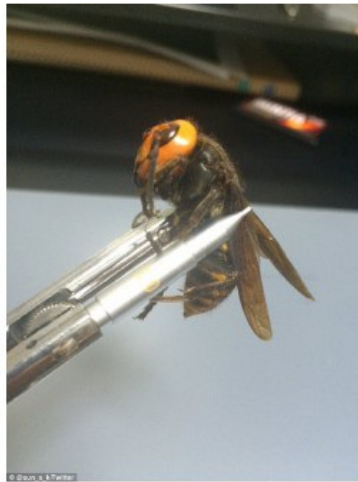
Asian hornets are most active between August and October but start to come out of hibernation in April and it is generally the queen that wakes up first.

Last year Asian hornets, which had arrived in Europe in a Chinese pot plant, were blamed for the deaths of six people in France.

The victims died from anaphylactic shock after being stung.

There were fears Asian hornets - which can kill 40 honey bees in one go - might hop across the Channel to Britain.

Comments (82)



I miss old
England,
Jalapa, United
States, 26
minutes ago

The radiation
leakage from
that earthquake
at the Japanese
power plant has
finally shown its
wrath. The

spiders are six feet tall. Raid won't do the trick anymore.

Goblinkatie, Muskego, United States, about an hour ago

A picture is worth a thousand "NOPE!!!"s.

idiotfighter, Newport, United Kingdom, about an hour ago

Someone's been pulling your leg. Yes, they are the world's largest hornet, but their body length is about 2 inches (5 cm) and nothing like the "altered" photos here.

Kayzlane, Chicago, United States, about an hour ago

Some of the most amazing insects, and creatures are super-sized over in those parts of the region. Yikes!!

Oni Silva, Chicago, United States, about 2 hours ago

Nice for a pet.

Clive Waterman, crayford, United Kingdom, about 2 hours ago

Ah yes a nice crunchy one underfoot

Defusion, Kingston, United Kingdom, about 2 hours ago

Argghhhh its massive!

sugargliderdude, Il, United Kingdom, about 3 hours ago

I've never heard of this insect before, and i am a massive invert fan... its very pretty... but glad its not in the UK...

Kayzlane, Chicago, United States, about an hour ago

Nor the US..

Cindy Dewalt-Couture, USA, United States, about 4 hours ago

I would have Literally PASSED OUT upon seeing this terrifying insect!

Far Queue, knowhere, United Kingdom, about 4 hours ago

Farque me thats huge, kill them all.

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Smell a rat? Giant rats in Tooting is a "hoax" that fooled the national papers and us

2 days ago

thisislocallondon.co.uk



"Giant rats" claimed to have been found in a housing estate in Tooting are actually giant swamp rats from the United States.



The "rats" claimed to have been found in Tooting are very similar to a National Geographic image

On Saturday, pest controller Dean Burr who runs Lords Environmental in Wimbledon, spoke to the Wandsworth Guardian as well as ITV, the Sun and the Evening Standard, about seven giant rats he said he found on a job on April 11.

He said at the time: "They were still alive, since the traps used were not man enough to take on rodents of this size

and were instead just "stuck" inside the traps. Having walked around the whole site we caught seven in total."

Mr Burr said he believed the rats had grown so large because of the "amount of rubbish and easily accessible food" available on the streets, as well as rats eating other rats.

He also said: "We need stronger poisons and the local councils need to be making sure all residents have bin storage to cut down the amount of plastic bags left outside houses, as this all provides foods to fatten them up."

Since then, eagle-eyed Mumsnet users from Wandsworth have spotted the same image Mr Burr sent the newspapers on the National Geographic website, from 2013.

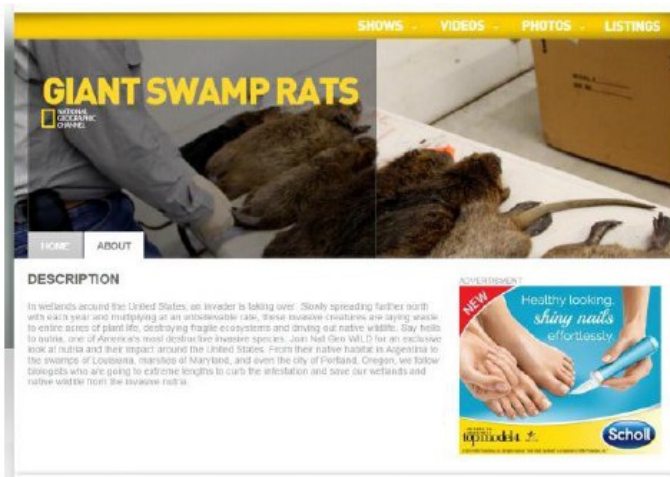
From Saturday: "Rats the size of cats" found in Tooting housing estate

Mr Burr has been contacted for comment.

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Goat breaks free, goes on Starbucks run in California

April 10, 2016

yahoo.com

<https://www.yahoo.com/news/goat-runs-away-home-goes-morning-starbucks-run-202209169.html?nhp=1>



This photo provided by the Rohnert Park, Calif., Department of Public Safety shows a goat that wandered into a Starbucks in the Northern California town Sunday, April 10, 2016.

Rohnert Park police Sgt. Rick Bates said employees who were opening the store tried to give the goat a banana, but the animal kept walking into the coffee shop and started chewing on a box. Bates took the goat into custody and brought it to an animal shelter. (Sgt. Rick Bates/Rohnert Park Department of Public Safety via AP)

ROHNERT PARK, Calif. (AP) — Police say a goat apparently needed a caffeine fix when it wandered into a Starbucks in Northern California.

Rohnert Park police Sgt. Rick Bates says dispatchers received several calls Sunday morning about a goat named Milly wandering around a strip mall on the city's eastern edge.

Bates says employees who were opening the Starbucks tried to give Milly a banana, but she walked past them and began chewing on a box.

Bates took Milly into custody and brought her to the animal shelter — but not before snapping photos of her sniffing around the Starbucks and posting them on the police department's Facebook page.

He says word spread to Milly's owner, and she has made it home.

She didn't travel far; her owner Alan Ergenbright says the 11-year-old pet goat lives just two doors down.

"When we heard, we thought she was a little crazy," Ergenbright told the Santa Rosa Press Democrat (<http://bit.ly/1S08l9V>). "She's a really happy and sweet goat. She's also pretty curious."

Rohnert Park is about 50 miles north of San Francisco.

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Clever Mother Goose Calls Police To Help Trapped Baby Bird

huffingtonpost.com

HUFFPOST WEIRD NEWS

There's gotta be a nursery rhyme for this.

05/11/2016 03:58 am ET

• Ed Mazza Overnight Editor

Cincinnati police responded to an unusual distress call on Monday... from a mother goose.

The bird was pecking on the door of a police cruiser in an apparent bid for some attention.

"It kept pecking and pecking and normally they don't come near us," Sergeant James Givens told WKRC. "Then it walked away and then it stopped and looked back so I followed it and it led me right over to [a gosling] that was tangled up in all that string."

The baby bird was caught in string from a balloon.

Givens and specialist Cecilia Charron called the SPCA for backup, but when no one was available they decided to help the gosling themselves.

With Givens recording and mother goose honking, Charron freed the baby bird from the balloon.

The baby animal promptly ran off to join the rest of the family:

Givens posted the gosling rescue video on YouTube and Facebook, and Charron's balloon-cutting skills earned her some kudos from the department brass:

Specialist Charron, thanks for a great job!<https://t.co/VMwJPfcv6x>

— LtC. Paul Neudigate (@paulneudigate) May 10, 2016

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said balloons frequently pose problems for birds, turtles and other animals.

Like the little gosling, some get entangled in the string — but many aren't rescued. Some are injured or strangled, and others choke while trying to eat the balloon.

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Grave in the Middle of the Road getting restored

Vic Ryckaert, vic.ryckaert@indystar.com

indystar.com

INDYSTAR

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The grave of Nancy Kerlin Barnett is being temporarily moved from County Road 400 South, near Amity, during road construction, May 2016. Kelly Wilkinson/IndyStar

UIndy archaeologist Chris Moore gently sifts through dirt at the grave site of Nancy Kerlin Barnett, as workers move to temporarily move her remains from the middle of E.



400 S. near Amity, Wednesday, May 11, 2016. (Photo: Kelly Wilkinson/IndyStar) Buy Photo

The last time someone tried to mess with Nancy Kerlin Barnett's grave, her grandson stood vigil with a firearm and dared workers to try and touch this hallowed site in Johnson County.

Barnett has rested mostly undisturbed except for the sounds of traffic passing in a teardrop

on either side along a country road that was built in 1905.

Until Wednesday, that is, when the state's Grave in the Middle of the Road started receiving its first major overhaul in 185 years.

The Johnson County Highway Department, Johnson County Museum and the University of Indianapolis are working together to exhume Barnett's remains slowly so they can better

protect the site while also working on County Road 400 South near Amity.

The bones, coffin nails and any other relics found buried there will be temporarily removed while Barnett's grave mound is lowered, a new protective barrier is added and the road is widened. The work is expected to cost about \$10,000.

"We are honoring her wishes and trying to keep the road as safe as possible," Johnson County Museum Director David Pfeiffer said.

Barnett, a farmer's wife, died in 1831. Her last request was to be buried on this site, then a grassy hill near Sugar Creek. More graves followed, and the area soon became a cemetery.



By the early 1900s, county officials decided the cemetery needed to make way for a road. When crews arrived to move the graves to a new location, they found Barnett's grandson, Daniel G. Doty, armed and standing vigil.

Doty won the skirmish without firing a shot. Crews built County Road 400 South around Barnett's grave mound. The burial site looks like a short highway median, bisecting the two oncoming lanes for about 15 feet.

INDYSTAR A concrete pad covering the grave, placed on Aug. 8, 1912, bears the scars of vehicles and tractors that have missed the jog over the years.

On Wednesday, crews closed the road and began using heavy equipment to remove that concrete pad and other stones covering the mound.

Archaeologist Christopher W. Schmidt and six UIndy graduate students began the methodical work of removing and preserving Barnett's remains. That could take a week or longer, depending on the weather.

"We know this is an important site," Schmidt said. "We are glad to be able to apply our science to something that is going to make the road safer and is going to protect those remains so they are not likely to be impacted by vehicle traffic."



(Photo: Kelly Wilkinson/IndyStar)

Buy Photo

Surveying was done before work was started to move the remains of Nancy Kerlin Barnett

If the site is left alone, officials fear that erosion may expose and damage Barnett's remains. Just a few hours into the project on Wednesday, the UIndy team had already recovered bone fragments that had migrated close to the surface.

Schmidt and his team will take Barnett's remains to a secure research facility at UIndy's campus. There, they will inspect and measure the bones to determine age, sex and ancestry, and compare those findings against what historians already know about

Barnett.

They'll look for signs of disease or injury. If they have time, the researchers hope to use a high-powered 3D microscope to inspect grooves and marks on the teeth that could tell them what Barnett ate.

This is a rare opportunity to learn about our Hoosier ancestors, Schmidt said.

"The best part about this job is being able to share the stories of the people who lived before us," Schmidt said. "What were they eating? How hard were they working? Where were they living? What was life like for them? How long were they living?"

When the highway work is complete, Barnett will be placed in a new coffin similar to one that would have been used back when she died, and returned to her resting place, said Pfeiffer, the museum director.

"She was one of the early Johnson County pioneers," Pfeiffer said. "For a woman we don't know much about, just knowing more about her would be interesting.

"It's really been a fascinating project to work on."

Call IndyStar reporter Vic Ryckaert at (317) 444-2701. Follow him on Twitter: @vicryc.

INDIANAPOLIS STAR

Forgotten graves of notable Indianapolis people

INDIANAPOLIS STAR

The business of body snatching in Indianapolis

UIndy graduate students gently sift through dirt at the grave site of Nancy Kerlin Barnett, as workers move to temporarily move her remains from the middle of E. 400 S. near Amity, Wednesday, May 11, 2016. Johnson County highway crews closed County Road 400 South



near Amity while a UIndy archaeologist digs up the resting place of Barnett, who lies in the middle of two lanes of country road. Barnett, a farmer's wife, died in 1831. Her last request was to be buried on this site, which was then a grassy hill near



Sugar Creek. The area soon became a cemetery. Years passed and the county decided to move the cemetery to make way for a road. As crews removed the other graves, Barnett's grandson armed himself and stood vigil until the crews decided to just build the road on either side. It's been that way ever since, until now. Archaeologist Chris Schmidt and his students will move Barnett's remains temporarily and do some tests on the remains. Later this month, crews will rebuild and lower the burial mound, widen the road and build a new protective barrier for the 185-

year-old grave. When that's done, Barnett will be returned to her resting place. The site has been the victim of not frequent, but regular traffic accidents over the years. The goal is to make the grave safer for drivers and Barnett's memory. Kelly Wilkinson/IndyStar

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Quahog.org: Grave of Mercy L. Brown

quahog.org



Mercy Brown's headstone, Chestnut Hill Cemetery, Exeter.

Quahog.org > Attractions > Grave of Mercy L. Brown

Grave of Mercy L. Brown

Rhode Island's favorite vampire.

Chestnut Hill Baptist Church Cemetery, Victory Highway, Exeter

George T. Brown had a problem—members of his family kept dropping dead.



Mercy Brown's headstone, Chestnut Hill Cemetery, Exeter.

George and his wife, Mary, and their five children lived on a small farm in Exeter. As was the case for many families in those days of high mortality rates, George's family seemed to have more than its share of illness. George's wife fell ill first, succumbing to consumption on December 8, 1883, at the age of 36. Mary Olive, 20, his eldest daughter, followed less than six months later on June 6, 1884.



For seven years death seemed to take a holiday, but then George's only son, Edwin, a healthy 24-year-old who worked as a store clerk, contracted the disease. Hoping he might find a cure in the mineral waters of Colorado Springs, Edwin packed up and headed west, his wife joining him there soon after to care for him. While Edwin was gone, his sister Mercy Lena also became sick. On January 18, 1892, she died. She was only 19. Because it was winter and the ground was frozen, her body was placed inside a crypt near the rest of her relations at the Chestnut Hill Cemetery, also known today as Historical Cemetery #22.

After Mercy's death George's neighbors began insisting he do something. Local superstition suggested that perhaps one of the deceased family members was rising from the grave to consume the life of the living. George was a pragmatic man, not given to such flights of fancy, but he did have two more daughters to think about. So, if only to set the minds of his neighbors at ease, he arranged for a doctor from Wickford, named Metcalf, to accompany a small group of friends and neighbors to the cemetery on the 17th of March. They went to exhume the corpses of the Brown women.

Once uncovered, the bodies of both Marys were found to be in a state of advanced decay, which was only to be expected since they had been dead almost ten years. But when the men entered the crypt to examine Mercy, they found that her corpse had shifted from its original position inside her coffin. What's more, her body was still fresh, for when the doctor cut out her heart it dripped blood. The doctor drained her organs of fluid and the men burned

her heart on a nearby stone wall. (Some accounts add that either her liver or her lungs were also burned). The balance of Mercy's remains were presumably given a proper burial later in the spring.

Some of the ashes were given to Edwin (who had returned from Colorado feeling better, but who had soon suffered a relapse) to drink as a sort of talismanic potion. Despite such desperate measures, Edwin died less than two months afterwards, on May 2, 1892.

But after that the deaths ceased. George survived well into the twentieth century, finally dying in 1922 at the ripe old age of 80. What happened to the other two unnamed daughters is unknown at this time.



Mercy's was the last of five alleged Rhode Island vampire cases, dating back to 1796. After the Mercy Brown exhumation in 1892, nobody in Rhode Island ever dug up the body of a suspected vampire again, probably because in 1882, it was discovered that tuberculosis (or "consumption") was spread by bacteria. In addition, the practice of embalming had begun to reach rural areas, making it implausible to imagine that thirsty fiends were rising from the grave to search for blood.



One of the cemetery caretakers told us how, as a child, his father used to lock him and his brother inside the crypt where Mercy Brown was briefly interred. You can check it out for yourself—the crypt is only a few dozen yards from the Brown graves. The stone where Mercy's heart was burned is only a yard or so from her mother's headstone.

When Bram Stoker, who wrote *Dracula* in 1897, died, newspaper accounts of Mercy Brown's exhumation were found in his files. Mercy's tale is also mentioned in the short story "The Shunned House" by H.P. Lovecraft, who lived in Providence.

Mercy Brown's Gravestone Inscription

MERCY L.
daughter of
GEORGE T. & MARY E.
BROWN,
Died Jan. 18, 1892,
Aged 19 years.

Ghost lights

Rumors still persist of ghostly goings-on up at Historical Cemetery #22. In 1984, a descendant of the Brown family, 51-year-old Lewis Everett Peck, told a Providence Journal reporter of a strange sight he saw in the early '60s:

"I was about 18 or 19 years old when this thing took place. We had a Model A... and I went up in the back of the Chestnut Hill Church with my brother David. And by God, we looked and we saw a great big ball of light, so bright that it was blue"

[hovering near the Brown family plot]. "It was a bright light, it was round. God she was bright, that's the part that stuck in you. I have no idea what it was. And to answer you how it went out, I don't know. We didn't stay."



On the five or six visits we've made to the cemetery, including two at night in October 1999 and on Halloween 2000, we saw no such lights, much to our disappointment.

Macabre theft

The lure of Exeter's vampire lore is so strong that it drove at least one person to steal the very stone from Mercy's grave. While Lewis Peck usually guards Mercy's grave on Halloween, when visitation and vandalism are expected, no one was on guard when the ninety-pound marker was taken sometime between August 8 and August 14, 1996. It was discovered missing that Wednesday afternoon by caretaker Doug Fulford.

A search of the cemetery failed to turn up the stone and there were few clues. Two sets of tire tracks were found at the scene and the grass was trampled around both Mercy and George's graves. Lewis Peck himself walked over the grounds looking without luck for the stone. "It's a stinking shame," he told the Providence Journal. "When you've got to steal someone's gravestone, that's bad."

Town Sergeant Richard S. Brown (no relation) offered a \$50 reward for the stone, but it proved to be unneeded. The stone was recovered only a few days later, on August 19, about fifteen feet from Mercy's grave. Although no further details on how the stone returned were offered by Sergeant Brown, he did allow as how "It's under lock and key and it might not be put back until after Halloween."



Mercy's stone is now back where it belongs, with a new reinforced base to prevent future wanderings. We've heard that Lewis Peck still watches over the grave on Halloween nights, and that he is happy enough to talk with friendly visitors about his famous relative. Those who wish to do mischief are, quite obviously, unwelcome.

Sins of the second cousin, twice removed

In addition to Mercy Brown, another almost-famous personality is buried in Chestnut Hill Cemetery. Toward the front of the graveyard you may find the stone of one Benedict Arnold. No, not Benedict Arnold the traitor, but a cousin of the same name who died in 1864. They are related through yet another Benedict, this one the first Governor of Rhode Island under the Charter of 1663.

According to one of the caretakers of the cemetery, Chestnut Hill's Benedict has had to bear the brunt of a great deal of malice directed toward his infamous relation. His stone has been vandalized and knocked over several times.

Eerie image



Mercy's legend continues to grow. In February 2005 a Connecticut resident named Steve posted an unusual item on eBay. Once you've read his story, we think you'll understand why he doesn't want us to use his last name:

I had often read about gravestone rubbings and seen some very beautiful ones both in books and on-line, and thought it would be neat to try something like this. Living close to the Rhode Island border, I was familiar with the story of Mercy Brown and thought it would be interesting to do a rubbing of her stone, as it is such a famous site and so well known. I remember thinking what a unique rubbing this would be, with such history and folklore that would be attached to [it] and what a conversation piece it would be.

My intention was to frame it and hang it in my den or my computer room, but I must admit I'm a bit creeped out by it and am anxious to get it out of my home.

The rubbing was made using Pellon, non-fusible interfacing, and black rubbing wax. It wasn't a difficult rubbing, as Mercy's stone isn't elaborate or ornate, [she] being a simple farmer's daughter. Everything seemed quite normal, nothing out of the ordinary. It was a warmer day, nearly fifty-five degrees, which was refreshing coming out of bitterly cold temperatures from the days before. The sun was shining and it was quiet, at times almost too quiet, I remember thinking. I couldn't quite put my finger on it, but later that night I remember... there were no bird sounds, no chirping, no squirrels in the trees, no animal noises! Not even wind the whole time I was there.

Later that evening I was preparing the final stages of the rubbing, where you heat the wax up on the material with a flat iron to melt it permanently into the material. I was $\frac{3}{4}$ done pressing the rubbing, having only the bottom right corner to complete, when my dog began freaking out in the next room, acting weird as though someone had pulled up to the house. I checked outside and no one had pulled into the driveway, so I walked back into the den to finish working with the rubbing. As I was walking into the room... I was looking at the rubbing draped over the ironing board when my stomach sank. I could see an outline of what looked like a face in the bottom right corner.

This was the last section that I had to heat up, and there in the fabric I could see what looked like a very evil face, almost with horns or pointed ears. It's the type of thing that you don't see when you're too close to it, but if you back away a bit, you can definitely see something there. Everyone I have showed it to says they see some type of face, some say it looks like the devil, some like it's part human part animal. Someone else told me they see what looks like an image of the left $\frac{1}{4}$ part of a skull. I decided not to heat this section up, for fear that this image would fade or the wax would distort it when it melted into the fabric. I have re-visited the headstone, and there is nothing there that would leave this impression, nor have I altered the rubbing in any way, shape, or form to make this image. No one else handled the rubbing but me, and I swear as a Christian this was a natural

occurrence.

I'm not going to tell you that anything ridiculous has been happening in my house like flying furniture or spinning beds, but I can honestly tell you my dog has been spooked for reasons I can't explain. She barks and growls for no reason and she seems only to return to her old self if the tombstone rubbing is not in the house. I'm not a superstitious person, and I consider myself a logical level-headed guy, but this thing really gives me the creeps. The hair stands up on the back of my neck, and it just gives me a very uncomfortable feeling I can't quite put into words. I get "goose-bumps" when I handle it, and as ridiculous as it sounds, I often feel like someone is watching me when I have this in the house. I have reverted to putting it into a packing tube and storing it in the trunk of my car. The only issue I have now is while driving I sometimes get this awful feeling like someone is sitting in the back seat when I'm driving alone, which causes me to keep checking the rearview mirror. I'm tired of the "creepy-crawlies," and have no interest in the occult or paranormal. This has cured me of my interest in tombstone rubbings...

Now who would be interested in such a thing? Well, we would, actually. So yes, we bid on it, but apparently we didn't want it badly enough, because someone outbid us at the last moment. We were disappointed, but philosophical.

A few days passed and we received an email from Steve. He said that the purchaser never contacted him and wouldn't respond to his messages, so he was going to list the rubbing again. He invited us to submit a new bid.

We thought that seemed odd. There had only been two bidders; one was a deadbeat, the other was us. Hadn't he said he couldn't wait for the cursed thing to leave his hands? Wouldn't it follow that he might offer to sell the rubbing to us outright, thus freeing himself from its awful sway in as short a time as possible? Well, whatever. When we went to place a bid, we found Steve had placed a reserve on the item, increasing our suspicion that the possibility of financial gain was overcoming his fear. We bid what we were willing to pay, but the reserve was not met. For the next ten days we kept an eye on the item's progress. Despite a few other bids, the auction ended without a sale. Our attempts to contact Steve to find out what happened were unsuccessful. We figure he's annoyed with us for not exceeding his reserve.

Too bad, because we had hoped to report back on what phenomena, if any, might attend the hanging of this artifact in Christopher's basement. Now we'll never know if the rubbing would have made his dog nervous, or if his luck would have taken a marked turn for the worse, or if a malignant presence would have touched him in his sleep, causing his hair to turn white and pitching him headlong into the abyss of madness.

A Contemporary Account

Pawtuxet Valley Gleaner
Letter to the Editor
March 25, 1892

Mr. Editor, as considerable notoriety has resulted from the exhuming of three bodies in Exeter cemetery on the 17th inst., I will give the main facts as I have received them for the benefit of such of your readers as "have not taken the papers" containing the same. To begin, we will say that our neighbor, a good and respectable citizen, George T. Brown, has been bereft of his wife and two grown-up daughters by consumption, the wife and mother about eight years ago, and the eldest daughter, Olive, two years or so later, while the other daughter, Mercy Lena, died about two months since, after nearly one year's illness from the same dread disease, and about two years ago Mr. Brown's only son Edwin A., a young married man of good habits, began to give evidence of lung trouble, which increased, until in hopes of checking and curing the same, he was induced to visit the famous Colorado Springs, where his wife followed him later on and though for a time he seemed to improve, it soon became evident that there was no real benefit derived, and this coupled with a strong desire on the part of both husband and wife to see their Rhode Island friends decided them to return east after an absence of about 18 months and are staying with Mrs. Brown's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Willet Himes. We are sorry to say that Eddie's health is not encouraging at this time. And now comes in the queer part, viz: The revival of a pagan or other superstitions regarding the feeling of the dead upon a living relative where consumption was the cause of death and so bringing the living person soon into a similar condition, etc, and to avoid this result, according to the same high authority, the "vampire" in question which is said to inhabit the heart of a dead consumptive while any blood remains in that organ, must be cremated and the ashes carefully preserved and administered in some form to the living victim, when a speedy cure may (un)reasonably be expected. I will here say that the husband and father of the deceased ones has, from the first, disclaimed any faith at all in the vampire theory but being urged, he allowed others if not wiser, counsel to prevail, and on the 17th inst., as before stated the three bodies alluded to were exhumed and then examined by Doctor Metcalf of Wickford, (under protest, as it were being an unbeliever.) The two bodies longest buried were found decayed and bloodless, while the last one who has been only about two months buried showed some blood in the heart as a matter of course, and as the doctor expected but to carry out what was a forgone conclusion the heart and lungs of the last named (M. Lena) were then and there duly cremated, but deponent saith not how the ashes were disposed of. Not many persons were present, Mr. Brown being among the absent ones. While we do not blame any one for there proceedings as they were intended without doubt to relieve the anxiety of the living, still, it seems incredible that any one can attach the least importance to the subject, being so entirely incompatible with reason and conflicts also with scripture, which requires us "to give a reason for the hope that is in us," or the why and wherefore which certainly cannot be done as applied to the foregoing.

Note: All errors of spelling, punctuation, and syntax are as they appeared in the Gleaner — ed.

Information

Cost: free

Time required: allow 5 minutes, more if you've brought your Ouija board

Hours: open year round, dawn to dusk

This is a cemetery. Please be respectful.

Finding it: from Route 95 take exit 5 to Victory Highway (Route 102) south to Route 3 south (Nooseneck Hill Road); take a right on Route 3, then an immediate left onto Route 102 (Victory Highway); the cemetery is 5.1 miles on the left; enter the cemetery and drive straight back, past a rock wall; the Brown family plot is on the left next to a cedar tree; the crypt where Mercy's body was briefly kept is to your right, at the edge of the cemetery.

This article last edited August 5, 2015

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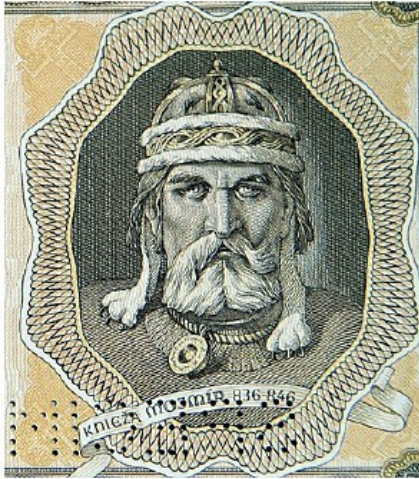
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Great Moravia: The Forgotten Kingdom ~ A Guest Post by Carolyn Emerick

By Susan Abernethy

thefreelancehistorywriter.com

Great Moravia: The Forgotten Kingdom ~ A Guest Post by Carolyn Emerick



Depiction of Mojmir I on a banknote of the Slovak State

Carolyn is a history writer and has agreed to write a post for The Freelance History Writer about a little known medieval kingdom. You can follow her on Facebook and on her blog.

Great Moravia was an important, if short lived, autonomous state in medieval Central Europe. It is important for many reasons, but among them because it is the first known kingdom of the Western Slavic tribes. To say it is forgotten is somewhat misleading for Great Moravia is remembered and celebrated with great pride by the Czech and Slovak people. But it is forgotten by conventional Western history books. It is natural for any given society to zero in on history that is most relevant to their own culture. And so, we in the West have studied Western European history with great zeal. Eastern European history tends to be relegated to chapters on

immigration to our countries from Eastern countries, and then skips to the Russian Revolution and the Cold War. Today, with globalization and the ease of access of information through technology, more people are interested in other world cultures. And many of us who have heritage from countries that have been overlooked in our Western history books are taking it upon ourselves to discover the hidden histories of the countries from which our ancestors came. Thus we begin this exploration of a medieval kingdom with immense importance to the people of Central Europe.



Map of Central Europe in Carolingian times denoting the area of Moravia

The central European region experienced a period of flux in the eighth and ninth centuries A.D. The Slavic tribes in the region were subjugated by various factions over the years and expected to pay tribute to these foreign rulers. Between the sixth and ninth centuries, a nomadic warrior tribe from the Eurasian Steppes had moved into the region, dominating the local people. These were the Avars and they were to rule the region virtually unchallenged. That is until Charlemagne entered the picture. There was a bit of a tug of war for a period but the long and the short of it is that with the help of his son Pippin and ally Duke Eric of Friuli, the Avars were defeated and eventually acknowledged Charlemagne as ruler. This is the

backdrop in which Great Moravia would rise as a political state.

Like much of the history from the lands that the Romans referred to as “barbarians,” the history of Central Europe before Christianization is blurry. Records from the pre-Christian societies either were not kept or were lost. Thus written history often begins with missionary efforts to these lands, and the rest we have to fill in using archaeology. And so it is with Great Moravia. We know tribal leaders in the region organized uprisings against their overlords. But apparently they did not meet with success as the Avars were not ousted until Charlemagne stepped in. With the Avars finally defeated, there was room for leaders to emerge from among the Slavic people in Central Europe.



Drawings of ninth century artifacts from Moravia

The principality of Moravia first appears in written history in Royal Frankish Annals of 822 when representatives of the Moravians are recorded paying tribute to Louis the Pious, son of Charlemagne. The first Moravian leader that we know of is Mojmir I. It is unclear whether he united the people himself under his leadership, or whether the Moravians unified under an unknown predecessor. However, it is clear that Mojmir I was a strong leader who founded a dynasty, the House of Mojmir.

Mojmir I is mentioned in several documents from the mid to late ninth century. We know that his power grew as he strengthened and expanded his territory. There is some debate about the existence of two neighboring principalities, Moravia (roughly in the Czech region) and Nitra (in the neighboring Slovak region). Pribina is mentioned as being the ruler of Nitra. It is unclear whether Pribina governed Nitra as a lieutenant under Mojmir, or if he ruled Nitra as an autonomous state in his own right. A text called “*Conversio Bagoariorum et Carantanorum*” (The Conversion of the Bavarians and the Carantanians)

written in 870 makes mention that Mojmir expelled Pribina across the Danube River. Sources are not clear whether Pribina, as an underling of Mojmir, was attempting to rebel or whether this event represents Mojmir of Moravia conquering Pribina’s kingdom of Nitra. In any case, the two regions were merged into one state under Mojmir’s rule by the mid-ninth century.



Coat of arms for the modern region of Moravia, now in the Czech Republic

This period of foundation, development and growth for Moravia was also a period of religious change. There are a few early mentions of the religious conversion of the Moravians. A Christian church in Mikulčice (Czech Republic) dated to the early ninth century has led some historians to believe Mojmir was converted before the year 825 A.D. And a mass baptism of the Moravian people in 831 was recorded in a document called “History of the Bishops of Passau.” Whereas other “mass baptisms” of many neighboring people during this era were violent and forced (the Saxons, Norse, Balts, and Wends were all converted at the point of a sword), the Moravians may have experienced a transition period where Christians and pagans lived side by side. The evidence for this in the afore mentioned church is dated to the same time that a pagan sanctuary is also known to have existed in the same city of Mikulčice, up through the mid-ninth century. We know that much of the populace was still pagan toward the second

half of the ninth century because a missionary effort was organized with the specific intent of converting the Moravian Slavs.

As Mojmir's power grew, Moravia became a threat to the Franks to the West. Mojmir I had no son so a relative, possibly a nephew named Rastislav, would be his successor. The early years of Rastislav are unknown, but it has been speculated that he was given as a hostage in his youth to Louis II the German, ruler of the East Frankish kingdom and grandson of Charlemagne. The trading of hostages was common at the time. The hostage would be fostered by whomever he was held by. The benefit of the situation for the hostage-taker was twofold. First, the country the hostage belongs to will be apt to behave itself if someone dear to the ruler could be harmed in the event of a revolt. Second, it's an opportunity to mold someone who may be of key strategic importance in the future, and instill in them the values of the host country, making them loyal to whomever is holding them instead of to their home country. If Rastislav was indeed a hostage, this may be exactly what occurred.

When a civil war broke out within the Eastern Frankish Empire, Mojmir I took the opportunity to rebel against Frankish control. It was only a matter of time before the Franks settled their internal disputes and then took revenge upon the Moravians. Mojmir was likely killed in the ensuing battle. However his death is not recorded, so it is possible that he fled and lived out his old age in obscurity. The Franks then placed Rastislav on the throne to rule Great Moravia in the year 846 A.D. It appears that the King of East Francia, Louis the German, had planned to use Rastislav as a puppet ruler and vassal. Louis would be sorely mistaken, as Rastislav would prove to have a mind of his own and steer the future of Great Moravia in a new direction.

But that, dear friends, is another story! I hope you have enjoyed this introduction to a fascinating medieval kingdom that many of us had never heard of. I hope to continue telling Moravia's story in a sequel to this article very soon. If you enjoyed this guest blog, please follow me on Facebook: www.facebook.com/carolynemerickwriter.

Further reading: "Franks, Moravians, and Magyars: The Struggle for the Middle Danube, 788-907" by Charles R. Bowlus, "East Central & Eastern Europe in the Early Middle Ages" edited by Florin Curta, "Moravia Magna: The Great Moravian Empire – It's Art and Times" by Jan Dekan, "The Czechs and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown" by Hugh LeCaine Agnew

9 responses

1. Shan Morgain says:
May 19, 2014 at 6:13 PM

My maternal ancestry is Moravian but I know only a little about it. My ancestors came to Essex, England as religious dissenters and weavers in the 19thC. I understand there was a lot of religious radicalism there going way back including peasant movements to take over ruined castles and run cooperative communities there. The Hus movement? and eventually Protestantism. Also very strong women leaders. I once met someone who had travelled the area and she told me (laughing) I was a typical Moravian woman – big, sturdy, emotionally expressive, bossy, matriarchal, creative and radical. Hmm.

There seems to be a lot in common with Wales, my adopted country. A zone dominated by powerful neighbour cultures, but resourceful at adapting and surviving that situation.

2. Princess of Eboli History Masqueradesays:

May 17, 2014 at 2:25 PM

3. thatgurlcarolynsays:

May 17, 2014 at 10:18 AM

Thank you for posting, Susan! And for the comments everyone!

4. thatgurlcarolyn says:

May 17, 2014 at 10:17 AM

Reblogged this on she.thinks.aloud and commented:

My guest post for Freelance History Writer

5. rafterd1972 says:

May 17, 2014 at 7:15 AM

Thank you for a great article. This adds another dimension to the Great Courses class I just finished called "The Barbarian Empires of the Steppes." Certainly another piece of history we don't find in our Western history books.

6. Ben Sorensen says:

May 17, 2014 at 6:51 AM

Iva, Vaclav I, the duke in Bohemia, was born in the 900s (907, I believe). Velka Morava had already invited the Sts. Cyril and Methodius, Even Svatopluk, by the time Vaclav I was born, had taken on the Franks and died in some "unlucky fashion." Velka Morava was disappearing by the time Vaclav I was born, actually. However, Vaclav I sets many things in motion, culminating in the Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV's reign.

7. Christian Gräs says:

May 17, 2014 at 4:18 AM

Dear Susan

Dear Carolyn

Thank you for sharing this great information. What a maveulous way to start the weekend. Your recommendations for reading will very much be on my list for the near future. As you write, Carolyn, eastern Europe must be filled with material not readily available for the ordinary history geek. I will look forward to chapter 2, indeed.

♦ thatgurlcarolyn says:

May 19, 2014 at 7:33 PM

Hi Christian, yes I find that it can be more difficult finding information on Central and Eastern Europe, especially their mythologies and folklore. Simple, surface

information is easily available, but if you want to go deeper and especially studies in their pre-Christian religious practices and mythologies it can be difficult because only a fair amount is published in English.

8. Iva P. says:

May 17, 2014 at 1:36 AM

Interesting article. At the same time the Czechs – the Westernmost Slavs – had their own ruler, Wenceslas, know as the good king in a popular Christmas carol. Sadly, he died young in 826 (if my memory serves me well).



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My Second Great Grandmother Was a Southern Outlaw— And a Slave

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thedailybeast.com

<http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2016/04/17/my-second-great-grandmother-was-a-southern-outlaw-and-a-slave.html?via=ios>



160415-taylor-southern-outlaw-tease

Illustration by Eddie Kihm for The Daily Beast

Goldie Taylor

REVENGE

04.16.16 9:15 PM ET

My Second Great Grandmother Was a Southern Outlaw—And a Slave

After Missouri Daniel Blackard—a freedwoman who was born a slave

in 1840—witnessed her father's assassination, she had one thing in mind: vengeance.

It was New Year's Eve, 1863.

The bushwhackers arrived at dawn, already sufficiently liquored and armed, the moon and the sun still hanging in the sky. Disguised in Union army coats, with kerchiefs covering their faces, three men set upon the house in Johnson County, Arkansas. Packing their saddlebags to the gills, pillaging the preacher's house and the surrounding fields, one held him at gunpoint while the others took turns raping his wife in front of their children—the youngest, Thomas, just four years old.

Then they turned their attention to the minister, who was standing on the wood-plank front porch. His arms spread wide, palms open like the Christ himself, Rev. Vincent Wallace offered no resistance.

One who lives fully is prepared to die at any time.

The first bullet took him in the shoulder, another struck his chest. A female slave named Missouri shielded his sons from the horror. The pastor lingered a few hours before he died. When the doctor had left and the preacher's soul had gone on to Glory, Missouri cleaned and dressed the body. As she wrung the bloody rags over a washbasin and the house filled with shrieking and crying, she had one thing in mind: vengeance.

Missouri—believed to be the preacher's illegitimate daughter sired with a slave—knew the assassins by name, despite the masks wrapped around their faces. They were young, maybe

According to an article the following day in the same newspaper, Sid arrived in Clarksville to great fanfare. “The people are coming in town from all parts of the country,” the *Daily Gazette* reported.

Fearing the convict would escape once again, Sid was brought in on an unscheduled train. The city marshal reportedly stopped all other trains from running through town. Church services were cancelled and businesses shuttered. A reporter from the *New York Herald* came to town, but Sid refused to see him.

“Never slept better in my life than last night,” he told another journalist.

At one point, he nearly confessed to the string of killings. His mother Ruth stopped him, chiding her son to “die like a man.”

Parson Barrows offered a prayer and then sang the hymn “Sing Praises to God.”

“Well, I am ready,” Sid told the preacher.

Throngs of people lined the roadside as they brought him in. Leaving two pistols to his young brother, Sid was “firm, cool and self-collected to the last,” the *Daily Gazette* reported. “Bury me with my shot-gun,” he said.

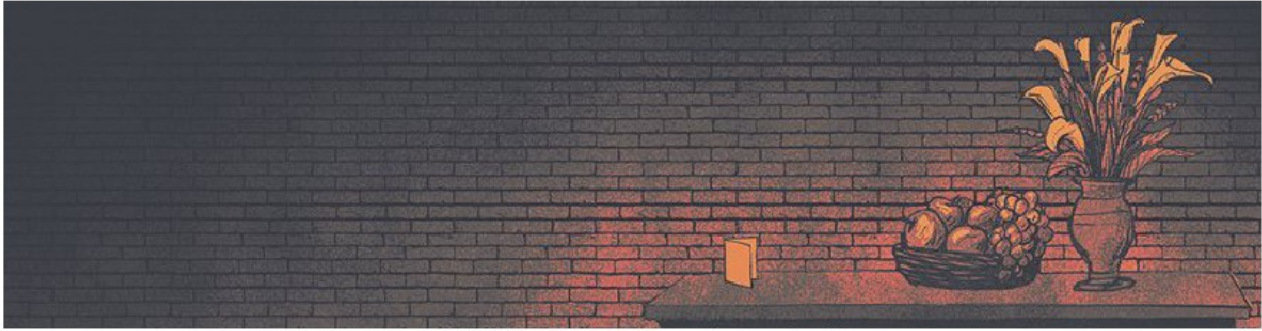
A company of guards lined both sides of a two-horse spring wagon, loaded with an empty coffin. Johnson County Sheriff Kline read a proclamation from Governor Elisha Baxter. It was then that Sid spoke his last words.

“Gentlemen, you have all come here no doubt to hear a long confession. I have no confession to make, but to God. What I have done has been in defense of myself and my friends,” he said. “All I regret is I haven’t half a dozen lives to die.”

A black cap was pulled over his face, and the rope was adjusted around his neck. He died with a prayer on his lips, “Lord, remember me.”

Hundreds of people witnessed the hanging of Sidney Oscar Wallace on March 14, 1874, but according to legend, Sid refused to die and Missouri refused to let him. News reports of the day said his heart was still beating 25 minutes after the hanging and that Sid was “short roped,” meaning his neck did not snap and he likely strangled to death—a far more excruciating experience. After another 40 minutes, satisfied that he was dead, the body was surrendered to his mother for burial. But, if the enduring folklore is to be believed, Sid survived the execution and his family buried a pine box of filled with sand bags.

On March 15, 1874, a story in the *Daily Arkansas Gazette* noted that he’d received a mysterious letter accompanied by a bouquet of flowers and a basket of fruit at the jail. Other accounts describe a mysterious woman in black who attended the hanging. Some say she was a well-moneyed mistress from Little Rock, maybe even the warden’s daughter, but most believe it was Missouri—the sister who would never betray him. Had Missouri risked her own lynching by stepping forward to save her brother one last time?



160415-taylor-southern-outlaw-embed1

For more than a century, Sid Wallace's honor has been a matter of debate. Portrayed by some as a man who brazenly challenged bushwhackers and carpetbaggers, for others he was a symbol of lawlessness and violence in Reconstruction-era Arkansas. In "An Arkansas Tale," the *New York Times* printed an account of Sid's crimes and the execution a week after his hanging, sadly concluding that his mother Ruth was nothing like her God-fearing husband. She encouraged, the story said, her two younger sons to follow in the footsteps of their "martyred" brother. The *Times* story, published on March 23, 1874, noted that Ruth was an educated woman, but lamented her "blood-thirstiness" and called her attitude "shocking."

Missouri is not mentioned.

Fondly remembered by white and colored townsfolk alike as "Aunt Missouri," she died quietly in her daughter's home in Clarksville, Arkansas on September 20, 1931. There was no grand memorial at her passing and, save for a few footnotes, no lasting tribute to her life. She was laid to rest at age 91, alongside her husband, Hence, and their children. For decades, her story has remained buried with her in tiny Spadra (now South Clarksville) and largely forgotten.

The morning after Missouri's interment, a nattily dressed stranger arrived in town and registered at a local motel as "Richard Johnson." He was later spotted laying a bouquet of flowers at Missouri's grave. Some believe he had also attended Ruth Suggs Wallace's 1914 memorial service in Van Buren, Arkansas. But the man was never positively identified. Many think it was Sidney Wallace, who is said to have resettled in upstate New York, where he started a family.

I am the scion of Missouri's youngest child, Major Blackard, who was born in 1880 and migrated to St. Louis around the turn of the century. Major, a laborer, believed he was cursed by his mother's sins. He died of cancer of the left jaw in 1927 and his body was returned to Johnson County. His wife, Effie, preceded him in death. Their son, Murray, was my great grandfather.

After his death, Major Blackard's daughters—Catherine and Juanita—were placed in the St. Louis Colored Orphan's Home sometime in the late '30s. A wealthy black farmer from Macon, Missouri, named Thomas Hubbard and his wife, Nina, adopted the girls and raised them in "The Ville" neighborhood.

My father's mother, Catherine, was a prolific storyteller. Waving her hands as if conducting an orchestra over the breakfast table, she recounted the bygone years, unspooling the decades like musical stanzas. She often spoke of the beauty she had experienced in this life, the cities she'd seen, the world she'd known.

But some of her memories—whether because they embarrassed her or because they caused too much pain—she kept tucked away, like the photos in the cardboard box. My brothers—Terrence and Christopher—and I were the light of her life, though she embraced Lori and Donnie, my mother's older children, like they were her own. But I was the baby—the child who shared her temperament, her only son's face, and her obsession with books. Catherine told me I was a writer long before I could know it for myself and, in time, it became my life's work. Even so, some songs—old cuts and abrasions—still sting too much to sing.

Until her memorial service in 1994, I never knew she had been adopted or even that her middle name was Marilyn. And she never once uttered the name Missouri Daniels.

"The lives of the dead," she once told me, "belong to the living."

She Was A Southern Outlaw—And A Slave

Goldie Taylor

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How much would Missouri sacrifice in his name and could she pull off one last scheme to save him from the executioner's noose?



160415-taylor-southern-outlaw -embed2

in their late teens or early twenties. But it was something in their voices, something in their eyes, and something about the way they smelled, and how one of them walked with a pronounced limp. Another was missing two fingers, shot off at the nubs when his gun misfired during a brawl over in Coal Hill.

Their time would come.

When the time was right, nearly a decade later, Missouri helped her half-brother track the killers across county and state lines in a bloody crusade to avenge their father's death. As one man after another met his Maker, Missouri remained in the shadows while her younger brother Sidney—who was only 11 the day his father died—became a folk hero with a price on his head.

When Sid Wallace was finally arrested and sentenced to death by hanging in 1874, the question became: How much would Missouri sacrifice in his name and could she pull off one last scheme to save him from the executioner's noose?



160415-taylor-southern-outlaw -embed1

Like tears in the rain, some moments will be forever lost to the ages. But Missouri Daniel Blackard—a freedwoman who was born a slave in 1840—was my paternal second great grandmother. And Pastor Wallace, a descendent of Irish colonist and Revolutionary War veteran William Wallace, was—if family lore is correct—my third great grandfather.

In the summer of 2009, I stumbled upon a box of old family photographs. I knew little about my father's family. That night, I poured a glass of wine. As began I shifting through the stacks

of Kodak envelopes that my grandmother Catherine had neatly organized and packed away, I missed her immediately.

I wanted to hear her voice. I wanted her to tell me the stories behind the pictures. By then, she had been gone for 15 years. And, frankly, there was no one else. My father, who was an only child, died in 1973 and his father passed away long before I was born.

It started with a search for birth and death records from St. Louis, Missouri, where I was raised. And as day turned to night and to day again, I found myself absorbed with piecing together their history—my history. There was a 1927 death certificate for Catherine's grandfather, Major Blackard. He was interred, the document said, in Clarksville, Arkansas. His parents, Henderson and Missouri Blackard, were also listed.

There was scant information about Henderson Blackard, who was born a slave in Person County, North Carolina around 1830. I found him in the 1870 U.S. census. Missouri, on the other hand, had somehow found her way into the newspapers of the day and was somewhat of a legend among the locals.

As I poured through genealogical research, dusty court documents, newspaper archives, and century-old family narratives, Missouri's story began to unfurl. Retracing the pathways of her life, from the North Carolina Piedmont through Arkansas's rugged backcountry, I discovered a woman who risked her life to challenge the strictures of race, gender, and family.

I have always known that I was the descendent of slaves. However, nothing prepared me for reading the earliest known record of Missouri's grandmother. The fact that she and her children had been someone's property, handed down from father to daughter like a set of rusty pots and pans, tore at my soul.



160415-taylor-southern-outlaw-embed1

"I cheerfully resign my soul into the hands of the God who gave it," Mathew Daniel wrote in his last will and testament.

The document, registered in Pittsylvania, Virginia in 1825, bequeathed 12 slaves to his surviving children. Presumably, the remaining 20 remained in his wife's possession. Specifically, he left a servant named Molly, her children—Biddy, Russell, Henry, and Eliza—and their "increase" to his daughter Jane Smith Daniel and her husband, Robert Wallace. Included in the inheritance were the anticipated profits from the sale of his "stock of horses,

cattle, sheep, hogs, and all household and kitchen furniture and plantation utensils.” Together with his land, bonds, books, and accounts, all proceeds were to be divided among his children upon the death of his wife, Agatha.

Vincent Wallace was ten years old the day his grandfather, affectionately called “Old Mat,” died.

In 1840, a decade after Congress passed the Indian Removal Act and President Andrew Jackson signed it into law, Mat’s son-in-law, Robert Wallace, decided to move out across the American frontier. Armed with a map of the trails, Robert—along with his son Vincent, Toliver Goldstone Blackard, John Penn, and their families—joined what became known as the Western Expansion.

Taking a small contingent of slaves, Robert Wallace led a wagon train out of Roxboro, North Carolina to the sounds of snapping harnesses and creaking wheels. With Toliver as the “keeper of the road” or the navigator, they weathered the slog of walking hundreds of miles, suffocating dust, extreme weather, bad water, disease, and death. Among the human chattel were Molly Daniel, who was my fourth great grandmother, her four children, and a granddaughter born that same year—a baby girl named Missouri.

The journey would last three years. After winding through Kentucky and southeast Missouri, in 1843 the caravan finally came to a stop in Spradra, just outside of Clarksville, along the Arkansas River. The Wallace and Blackard descendants would fight there, love there, and most often die there.

When his father, Robert, passed away in 1848, Vincent and his wife Ruth inherited eight-year-old Missouri. Believed to have been the illegitimate child of Molly’s youngest daughter, Eliza, and Vincent, the girl was said to have shared her father’s close-set, crystal blue eyes, shock of dark brown hair, and his narrow angular chin. Vincent was a Christian school teacher and, in time, would go on to become a wealthy farmer, pastor of a Methodical Episcopal church and a member of the 9th Arkansas State Legislature.

Missouri lived in the Wallace house from the time she was a babe-in-arms, and enjoyed a rare relationship with her father. When he was elected to the Arkansas statehouse in 1852, to Ruth’s dismay, Missouri would often join him on the 80-mile trek to Little Rock. Beginning with passages from the Bible, Senator Wallace taught his daughter to read, write, and “figure” numbers—something that was exceptional but not illegal in Arkansas.

Missouri was baptized in the Arkansas River when she was ten and allowed to marry a slave named Henderson “Hence” Blackard when she was 16 or 17. The actual date of their wedding is not recorded, but Hence was ten years older than Missouri and had been brought with them on the journey from North Carolina by his master, Toliver Blackard.

Their first child, Ann, was born in 1858.

The Civil War touched off three years later and because of the town’s proximity to the river, both armies regularly passed through. Colonel Thomas J. Churchill’s Confederate troops

camped south of Clarksville during the winter of 1861. The Cumberland Presbyterian church was used as a hospital and then burned by departing Union troops, who also torched Rev. Wallace's church and the Johnson County jail and damaged the court house on their way out.



160415-taylor-southern-outlaw-embed1

But on the morning of Dec. 31, 1863, federal soldiers were in possession of Clarksville when three men rode up to the home of Rev. Wallace and told the preacher they wanted a horse he had. It was not unusual for soldiers to confiscate anything and everything they needed or wanted. According to R. G. Miller of the *Daily Oklahoman*, the preacher complied, led them to the barn, and handed over the steed. They then demanded that the minister go into town with them.

Missouri handed Rev. Wallace his hat and he left the house. His wife, Ruth, watched them as they started to ride away. Just outside the front gate, approximately 150 feet from the front porch, once of the soldier said, "Take charge of him!"

Contemporary newspaper accounts said Missouri quickly realized that they weren't soldiers, but rather bushwhackers who regularly harassed, robbed, and sometimes murdered loyal Union farmers.

"Most of the bushwhackers were illiterate young men in their teens and early twenties," according to "Civil War on the Western Border," a project of the Kansas City Public Library. "They clung together in bands of 12 to 20..."

No motive was ever determined, as Rev. Wallace was nothing if not loyal to the Confederacy. Although there were Union soldiers from Spadra and Clarksville, his eldest son, John, best friend Toliver Blackard, and others were in service of the CSA fighting for "states rights."

As the three men went about their villainy, the pastor was held at gunpoint. He heard his wife screaming from inside the house. He knew what was happening. There was no need to see it for himself.

"Are you not afraid?" one of the men asked.

"Let us never think strange that which the word of Christ has told us to expect," the preacher said, "Whether the sufferings of this present time or the Glory that is to be revealed."

"We will make you fear us," another said.



"Did you see them?" Ruth asked the slave woman. "Did you see the men who did this?" "Yes," she answered. "I know them by name."



160415-taylor-southern-outlaw-embed3

All three men raised their guns and shot him where he stood. They kept firing, even after the body had fallen. One round entered the sole of his boot and lodged in the preacher's groin. As the clouds of smoke drifted and faded in the December wind, Rev. Wallace lay twitching in a pool of his own blood under the morning sun.

When the deed was done, the bandits rode off laughing and swigging whiskey as their horse's hooves set upon the dusty road.

The pastor's son, Sidney, then only 11 years old, bolted through the screen door lugging his father's shotgun. He didn't get far. Missouri, then 23 and pregnant with her third daughter, tackled and pinned him to the dirt. The boy kicked and shouted, boiling with rage. Missouri covered him with the full of her body, draping her housedress over his face to keep him from seeing the perpetrators.

"This ain't the time," Missouri whispered, soothing and quieting the boy. "Our day will come."

Together with Ruth Suggs Wallace, Missouri then took up Master Wallace's body by the shoulders and boots and dragged him inside.

"Did you see them?" Ruth asked the slave woman. "Did you see the men who did this?"

"Yes," she answered. "I know them by name."

Missouri cleaned the blood from her master's mouth as he lay dying in his bed. A doctor from a neighboring farm tended to his wounds. Rev. Wallace lasted a few hours, long enough to admonish his children to lead Christian lives. "The physical pain is intense, but my mind is at rest," he told to his wife.

And then, he slipped away.

Rather than prepare for evening church services as had been planned, Ruth busied herself with her husband's funeral clothes. As she arranged a freshly pressed necktie over the shoulder of Vincent's black suit, she turned to Missouri and said, "Sidney is not yet of age and

does not share his father's Christian mind. I fear the harm that would most surely come to him if he tries to seek the bastards out now."

Missouri nodded in agreement.

"The devil is in his head, even now, and I fear I cannot keep this from him. Let it stay with us for now. Do not reveal their names until my Sidney reaches his 21st birthday."

"Yes, ma'am," Missouri answered.



160415-taylor-southern-outlaw-embed1

Missouri kept that vow even after she gained her freedom two years later. In fact, years after the war ended, she remained employed in the Wallace household and quietly kept tabs on the murderers for nearly a decade. In the intervening years, she gave birth to two boys—William and George—adding to three daughters: Ann, Lucinda, and Susan.

Those were hard years after the war. Ruth Suggs Wallace and her children suffered great losses after the death of Rev. Wallace. Prior to her husband's death, Ruth had never known a day's work. With no other means of support, she and her sons worked the land.

The coming railroad lines, for Little Rock and Fort Smith Railroad, were key to the area's growth. But the influx of Reconstruction officials, coal mine workers, and construction employees brought with it a criminal element, and Clarksville quickly became known for its unsavory reputation. Soon enough, Sid Wallace and his brothers fell into the culture of lawlessness. And, some eight years after the assassination, when Sid was about 20, he confirmed his mother's early suspicions.

In 1871, he and his brother George tried to rob a man named Turner, who was armed and prepared for such things. Turner shot and killed George during the robbery. To pay him back, Sid later hunted down and murdered Turner's best friend.

The charges against Turner were dropped as "self defense," and Sid was charged with attempted murder in the case. Undaunted, Sid went after the men who freed his brother's killer—Constable R. W. "Doc" Ward and Judge Jeremiah "Elisha" Mears. Even though he was once one of Rev. Wallace's closest confidants and an elder in the church, Sid didn't blink before he shot Judge Mears through the heart.

Sid set off into the thick woods of the Ozarks, hiding out for months. With Missouri's help, he evaded authorities even as Arkansas Governor Robert Lindsay offered a \$5,000 reward for his capture (\$100,000 adjusted for inflation). He was apprehended, but based on the words of the dying judge he was acquitted on the murder charge.



According to an 1874 New York Times article,
the incident ended only after Clarksville
authorities threatened to blow the jailhouse
to “atoms” if Sid refused to surrender.



160415-taylor-southern-outlaw-embed5

The following year, Missouri decided it was time to hand over the names of the men who killed their father. Sid struck out immediately and tracked down the first of his father's attackers. Based on Missouri's word, he located one of the killers at his home in Kansas. Sidney charmed his way into the house, stayed the night with the family, had breakfast with them the next morning, and then pumped a bullet into the man's head before he calmly walked out the door.

He shot a second man, at point blank range, square in the chest on a road outside of Clarksville, Arkansas. Sid beat the lone witness to within an inch of his life. He was not hard to find, as he was discovered resting at home with Ruth. Missouri was preparing supper for him when the city marshal arrived.

He did, however, prove to be a difficult man to keep locked away.

Within hours, Sid removed a jailhouse window, mounted a horse left hitched to a post by Missouri, and returned home again. According to family lore, a posse arrived soon after to take him back into custody. But Sid escaped again, this time by hiding under Missouri's skirts when she went to the family well. The fugitive hid in the well for several days, coming up only in the dead of night and returning to the well before first light. Over her husband's objections, Missouri sneaked him food.

Hence, Missouri's husband, was increasingly uneasy about his wife's actions. She had become a co-conspirator, helping Sid find his victims and then helping him break out of jail, and Hence feared the deadly consequences if the night watchmen ever showed up at their two-room, plank board house situated on the Wallace's 160-acre tract.

A spy for the city marshal watched Missouri head out to the well one time too many. Sid and his younger brothers, Mat and Thomas, were arrested after an armed standoff. Several days later, the three men overpowered the guards and seized their weapons. Taking aim through a

broken window, Sid shot a man named Tom Payne who was standing in the gathering crowd outside. Payne's "crime" had been to testify against Sid regarding the murder of the constable. According to an 1874 *New York Times* article, the incident ended only after Clarksville authorities threatened to blow the jailhouse to "atoms" if Sid and his brothers refused to surrender.



The death warrant was signed.



160415-taylor-southern-outlaw-embed4

It was decided that the Johnson County jail was not secure enough to hold him. Sid was taken to the state penitentiary in Little Rock for safekeeping. Unlikely sisters-in-arms, Ruth and Missouri visited regularly, if only to plot his next escape.

According to the Arkansas Historical Society, the ever-charismatic Sid was allowed out of prison one evening to accompany the warden's daughter to a social ball. The warden quickly changed his mind about the prisoner when his daughter begged that Sid be permitted to escape so that the couple could elope. But she wasn't alone in singing his praises.

On March 10, 1874, the *Daily Arkansas Gazette* reported that 1,068 Johnson County residents signed a petition requesting that the death sentence be commuted. For them, Sid was a hero—a man who was simply avenging his father's death. That appeal and all others, including one to the Arkansas Supreme Court, were denied.

The death warrant was signed.



160415-taylor-southern-outlaw-embed1

Grief and Spiritual Crisis in the Middle Ages - Medievalists.net

medievalists.net

May 7, 2016 By Daniele Cybulskie

by Danièle Cybulskie

The other day, a friend and I were discussing **an article I had written** (that appears in **my book**) about maternal advice to a daughter regarding the spiritual crisis that might befall her if she ever loses a child. What I said in the article, and still say today, is that existential crises and questions of faith in times of hardship are not modern phenomena. Medieval people routinely questioned their faith, most poignantly when it came to death.



Death of Ferdinand of Castile – British Library Royal 20 C VII f. 11

For medieval Christians, death presented only three options: heaven, hell, and purgatory, a state in which the soul languished until he or she was finally accepted into heaven after the purgation of minor sins that might have gone unconfessed at the moment of death. The trouble was that people did not know what state their souls would be in after death until it actually happened, which left people anxious about when death would come to them. Debates raged amongst theologians around hypothetical deathbed situations, so you

can imagine the confusion and the questions of the common people who hadn't studied the church fathers' writings all their lives. This fear of purgatory and hell is precisely why papal interdict was such an effective weapon: even if monarchs like England's King John were not particularly bothered by the fact that they might die unshriven, the general populace would have been most unwilling to risk it for themselves or for their families and friends.

Death could be spiritually devastating for surviving loved ones not only because they worried for the soul of the deceased, but also because they questioned the spiritual reasons behind their losses. If they were forever reassured by the clergy that God loved them, and that good fortune was a sign of divine favour, why was it that some people died and some lived? Why were the survivors made to feel such grief? Although I've heard people say that medieval people must have been used to death, especially in terms of the frequent deaths of children (in the most recent edition of *National Geographic History* magazine, I was disappointed to read Juan Pablo Sanchez suggest it is "perhaps surprising" that Henry III's wife Eleanor "fell ill with grief" when her disabled daughter died in early childhood), death has always, always been traumatic. The fifteenth-century Valencian poet **Ausiàs March** wrote extensively of his feelings after the death of his "wife-beloved" (XCII, l.180), and addresses head-on how the commonality of death does nothing to diminish its impact:

*Why does an event so common as death
 seem so severe to whomever it wounds?
 Why at times does man's reason retreat
 and the passions muster all their power?
 God, compassionate, just, seems cruel to us,
 our understanding so greatly is perplexed;
 the pain abates, and faith at once returns,
 but firm understanding lies beyond our power. (XCII, ll.171-178)*

Later in the poem, March writes, "If I could be sure she with the blessed dwells, / I would not wish that she were still alive" (ll.239-240). In other poems, he writes of anxieties about how he'll never know where his wife's soul ended up unless his goes to the same place (XCIII, ll.1-8), and he worries about the possibility of "for all eternity, two hearts parting that had always been one!" (XCVII, ll.37-38) Clearly, reassurances from the church were not enough to suppress his fears or soothe his pain, despite March's fervent desire for reassurance. If medieval people were worried about the fate of a loved one's soul, they could pay for masses or prayers to be said on the deceased's behalf, in order to shorten his or her time in purgatory (just in case that's where the soul ended up), but firm assurance was impossible. What agony it must have been to wonder about your loved one's eternal soul!

Another facet of grief which was problematic for medieval faith was the fact that despair was also a sin, leaving people to question not only the divine plan, but also how they could not despair in the face of tragedy. The church's teachings against suicide were not enough to prevent people from taking their lives in despair, not even for children (as **Terence R. Murphy** has written). Even faithful Christians like **Christine de Pizan** found themselves driven by grief into thoughts of self-destruction. She writes on the death of her husband,

*I can never forget this great,
 incomparable suffering which brings my
 heart to such torment, which puts into my
 head such grievous despair, which
 counsels me to kill myself and break my
 heart. (17, ll.7-12, p.6)*

Although Christine is aware that these thoughts are not spiritually correct – that her faith should prevent them – she feels them so deeply that she risks public censure by writing her thoughts down instead of hiding them. Given the amount of loss experienced during Christine's lifetime (during The Hundred Years' War), it's likely that the court for which she was writing felt more sympathy than judgement.

In a religious society, like that of medieval Europeans, it can be difficult to admit just how deeply your own doubts may go, especially about such important concepts as the afterlife. Ausiàs March, though, expresses his spiritual fears and doubts with a rare amount of candour

in a long poem he wrote when he believed he was facing his death. He prays to God to bring him the faith that he knows he should have, but admits that his plea comes from self-interest, saying, "my fear of you is greater than my love" (CV, l.57). March describes his terror of hell, but says, "I ask for Heaven, yet little prize it" (l.87) because he finds it so difficult to imagine ("we must guess at Paradise, unfelt", l.208). March is a self-confessed sinner who admits to loving sin more than virtue, and though he fears the afterlife he's been taught about in the Christian tradition, he struggles to believe in it. His poem is agonizing as he pleads for God to grant him faith enough to escape damnation, even though he knows he's caught in the catch-22 that selfishness is not likely to earn him entry into heaven. Although March's raw, brutal honesty is rare, his spiritual doubts and anxieties would not have been.

While the medieval Western world was much more faithful than it is today, we should not assume that this meant they never questioned their religion, especially in times of grief and loss. For many medieval writers, the struggle to accept the mysteries of Christianity strengthened their faith, but struggle was certainly a part of it. To read Ausiàs March's poems on love and loss, do check out the excellent ***Ausiàs March: Verse Translations of Thirty Poems***. You can find some of Christine de Pizan's poems on widowhood in ***The Selected Writings of Christine de Pizan***, including the one I've quoted here.

Filed Under: Features Tagged With: 5MinMedievalist, Religious Life

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Grim Discoveries Point to Child Sacrifice and Human Trafficking in Ancient Maya Civilization thescienceexplorer.com



The Science Explorer

Grim Discoveries Point to Child Sacrifice and Human Trafficking in Ancient Maya Civilization

By Erica Tennenhouse on April 25, 2016



Old human skull

Photo credit: Nate/flickr (CC BY-NC 2.0)

Archaeologists go inside the Midnight Terror Cave

Hundreds of human bones lay scattered across the floor of a cave in Belize, fittingly called the Midnight Terror Cave.

Ancient Maya would gather here to make human sacrifices to a rain,

water, and lightning god that they called Chaac.

Michael Prout, an archaeologist at California State University, recently described disturbing discoveries about the victims of these sacrifices at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Physical Anthropologists.

The researchers found 9,566 human bones, bone fragments, and teeth on the cave floor. But most surprising was that a large portion of those remains belonged to young children under the age of 14. Many were youngsters between the ages of 4 to 10 years old.

Bodies were deposited in the cave over a roughly 1,500-year span, starting at the dawn of Maya civilization and ending around 3,000 years ago, based on radiocarbon dating.

At least 114 bodies, mostly those of children, were dropped into the deepest and darkest parts of the cave near an underground stream. The ancient Maya believed caves containing water sources were home to gods that controlled rainfall, so it is likely that the bodies were intentionally placed there as an offering to Chaac.

Researchers working at the site have also revealed unexpected details about who

these child sacrifice victims were.

Samantha Lorenz, part of a team of experts studying the chemical composition of the remains, told *Collectors Weekly*, "No one's from Belize, so that means we have this population of children that was brought in from somewhere else for the purpose of sacrifice."

This might indicate that there was a human-trafficking network trading in children, Lorenz explained.

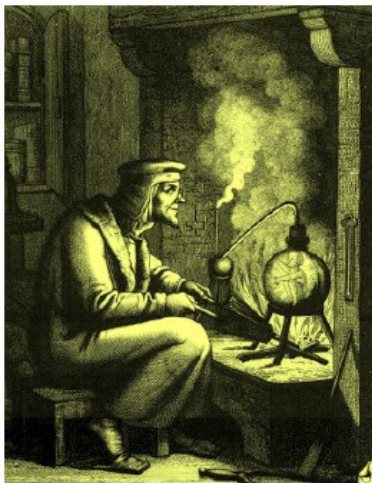
Previously, an underground cave at Chichén Itzá in southern Mexico contained the only known evidence of child sacrifice by the ancient Maya, and this practice was considered uncommon. "Taken together, however, finds at Chichén Itzá and Midnight Terror Cave suggest that about half of all Maya sacrificial victims were children," said Prout.

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Wednesday, 4 January 2012

GROW YOUR OWN HOMUNCULUS



Creating a homunculus via alchemy

Even today, the alchemists of medieval times remain famous for their supposed (but unconfirmed) ability to transmute base metals into gold, using the fabled philosopher's stone. Less well-remembered, yet even more controversial, is their alleged artificial creation of tiny living humanoids - known as homunculi. Some references to homunculi in alchemical texts featured them as symbolic rather than literal. For instance, the fabled Philosopher's Stone is sometimes considered to be a homunculus, with its creation no less than the representation of the Great Work (Magnum Opus) process, merely described in a different way.

A symbolic homunculus, depicted in *The Pretiosissimum Donum Dei* ('The Most Precious Gift of God'), an important 15th-Century alchemical work by Georgius Aurach de Argentina

In September 1994, however, Paul Thompson published an engrossing review of this largely-forgotten arcane subject in America's *Fate Magazine* that contained some remarkable revelations regarding the alleged creation of living homunculi.

Alchemists claimed that the culture medium required for the growth of homunculi contained several biological fluids such as sputum or egg-white, and sometimes inorganic fluids like dew, but the two substances most commonly cited as essential were human blood and semen - both of which are widely believed in primitive or non-scientific societies to harbour the vital essence of life. Also required was horse manure, whose heat-releasing properties



were utilised to incubate the medium.

Bearing in mind that all of the above ingredients are readily obtainable, why was the production of homunculi a skill restricted to alchemists? The answer is that the recipes always seemed to contain one vital ingredient that was exceptionally complex and difficult to prepare.



Paracelsus, painted by Quentin Massys

For example, in the homunculus recipe contained within the treatise *De Natura Rerum*, written by 16th-Century Swiss scholar and alchemist Theophrastus Paracelsus (aka Philippus von Hohenheim), 'the arcanum of human blood' was included - essential but esoteric, its constituents known only to the alchemical fraternity. Here, just in case any reader wishes to attempt it himself, is Paracelsus's description of how to create a

homunculus:

"Let the semen of a man putrefy by itself in a sealed cucurbite [glass vessel] with the highest putrefaction of the venter equinus [horse manure] for 40 days, or until it begins at last to live, move, and be agitated, which can easily be seen. After this time it will be in some degree like a human being, but, nevertheless, transparent and without body. If now, after this, it be every day nourished and fed cautiously and prudently with the arcanum of human blood, and kept for 40 weeks in the perpetual and equal heat of a venter equinus, it becomes, thenceforth, a true and living infant, having all the members of a child that is born from a woman, but much smaller. This we call a homunculus; and it should be afterwards educated with the greatest care and zeal, until it grows up and begins to display intelligence."

Equally obscure is 'animal tincture', listed in another medieval recipe.

The vaguely human-looking root of the mandragora or mandrake plant *Mandragora officinarum* inspired the false belief during medieval times that it could be utilised in the production of homunculi. During his body's last convulsive spasms before death, a hanged man will sometimes ejaculate semen, and it was said that where this fell to the ground, a mandrake would grow. If its anthropomorphic root was then pulled out before dawn on a Friday morning by a black dog, then washed, and nurtured with milk, honey, and sometimes human blood too, the root would subsequently develop into a homunculus, which would guard and protect its owner.

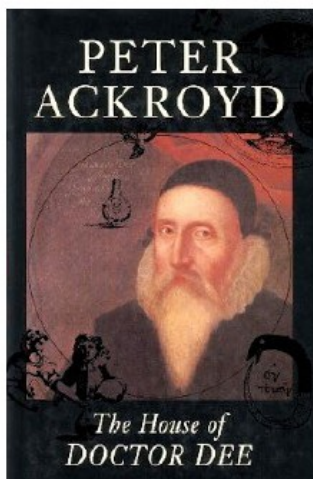
Mandrake with unrealistically humanoid root, depicted in *Tacuinum Sanitatis*, a 15th-Century manuscript



An even more exotic recipe for growing your own homunculus was cited during the 1700s by no less a figure of learning than Dr David Christianus from Germany's Giessen University. According to his claim, an egg should be taken from a black hen, and a tiny hole should be poked through its shell. A bean-sized portion of the albumen then needed to be removed and replaced by human semen, after which the egg's opening should be sealed with the hymen from a virgin maiden. Once this was accomplished, the egg must be buried in dung during the first day of the March lunar cycle. After 30 days, a homunculus should emerge from the egg, and as long as its owner provided it with a regular diet of earthworms and lavender seeds it would

protect him and assist him in all of his endeavours.

Notwithstanding the inherent difficulties in obtaining the necessary ingredients and in performing the intricate series of processes required, records detailing the successful culturing of homunculi do exist. An extraordinary specimen grown from distilled human blood and able to emit beams of red light was reputedly cultured and exhibited at the court of France's King Louis XIV by royal physician Dr Borel.



Homunculi feature in many contemporary novels including Peter Ackroyd's *The House of Doctor Dee* (1993), in which he portrays real-life Elizabethan magus John Dee successfully creating a homunculus

As fully documented in Dr Emil Besetzny's book *Sphinx* (1873), however, the most outstanding case must surely be the creation of ten living homunculi in a mere five weeks, accomplished by two Austrian alchemists from the late 16th Century - Count Johann Ferdinand von Kufstein and Abbé Geloni.

Like all homunculi, they were grown in sealed jars (homunculi die if exposed for any considerable period to the air), filled with water and eventually buried under heaps of manure. These were treated (as usual) with some special, but unspecified, solution, and doubled the size of eight of the homunculi, producing a series of 1-ft-tall specimens.

No two homunculi looked the same, and to each was fixed an identity. Eight were physical manikins, known respectively as the king, queen, knight, monk, nun, seraph, miner, and architect, and clothes pertinent to their identities were manufactured for them. Each of these eight homunculi was fed with special pink tablets every 3-4 days, and their water was changed once a week. On at least one occasion, the 'king' homunculus escaped from his jar, and was earnestly trying to remove the seal on the jar housing the 'queen' when he was spotted by Count Kufstein's butler. Chased by Kufstein and the butler, the 'king' soon fainted from exposure to the air, and was put back inside his own receptacle.

The remaining two homunculi were non-corporeal, and only appeared when Geloni tapped their jars and chanted certain magical words. A face would then materialise in each of them; moreover, in one the liquid would turn blue, in the other it would turn red. The red 'spirit' homunculus was fed on blood, and its water was changed every 2-3 days, but the blue 'spirit' homunculus was never fed and its water was never changed.

All ten homunculi would answer questions concerning future events, invariably predicting correctly the outcomes, and they were observed by many people. These included some very notable personages, like Count Franz Josef von Thun and Count Max Lamberg. Surely, however, such bizarre man-made entities could not really have existed - or could they?

I cannot help but wonder whether these particular homunculi were nothing more than large amphibians brought back by travellers from the tropics. One likely candidate is the African clawed toad *Xenopus laevis*, a common species vaguely humanoid in shape, which lives permanently in water - explaining why the 'king' fainted soon after escaping from its jar?



Homunculi – created from blood, or merely specimens of the African clawed toad (like this one)? (Michael Linnenbach/Wikipedia)

No-one knows what happened to nine of the homunculi after Geloni and Kufstein ultimately went their separate ways. However, an event occurred that may actually have left behind some tangible evidence of the tenth. Once, the jar containing the 'monk' homunculus was accidentally dropped, smashing as it hit the floor and killing its humanoid inhabitant. His body was afterwards buried in the grounds of Kufstein's Tyrolean residence - but where is this today? If only we knew its locality, the soil around it could be sifted, as suggested by Paul

Thompson - and who knows what remains might be found?

One thing is certain. If a 12-in-long skeleton is ever found under these circumstances, Thompson would be very interested to learn more about it - and so would I.

This article is extracted and expanded from the homunculus section of my book *The Unexplained: An Illustrated Guide to the World's Natural and Paranormal Mysteries* (Carlton: London, 1996).

Posted by Dr Karl Shuker at 13:25

1 comment:

1. Anonymous14 February 2012 at 17:46

Personally, I don't think that *Xenopus* looks too humanoid - but it is really cute!! Could the homunculus actually be an account of a hobbit? Smallest documented human I could think of. Only problem is that they would drown in the jars. Another more fanciful

possibility could be one of the Little People documented in history, or even an alien as some believe the fairies could actually be. But who knows?

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Coast Guard Berates 'Bubble Man' After Second Ridiculous Rescue At Sea

huffingtonpost.com

HUFFPOST WEIRD NEWS Ray Baluchi's publicist says he plans to try his 3,500-mile "ocean run" yet again.

04/26/2016 07:21 pm ET

• Chris D'Angelo Associate Editor, HuffPost Hawaii

After violating an order from the U.S. Coast Guard, an ultra-marathoner had to be rescued — yet again — from his hamster-wheel-like floatation pod just one day into what was supposed to be a five-month ocean trek.

Ray "Reza" Baluchi, 44, of Florida, set off in his makeshift "hydropod" on Saturday from Pompano Beach, Florida, determined to complete a 3,500-mile ocean run to Bermuda, Puerto Rico, Haiti, Cuba and back to Florida.

Instead, Baluchi, also known as "Bubble Man," requested help after a Coast Guard crew spotted the man and his bizarre, less-than-sea-worthy contraption off the coast of Jupiter, Florida, some 50 miles north of where he started.

#BreakingNews: Adventure runner's voyage ends after he violated a USCG order not to embark on his seagoing journey. pic.twitter.com/FxNUEawySO

— USCGSoutheast (@USCGSoutheast) April 24, 2016

After Baluchi announced his "ocean run" earlier in April, the Coast Guard issued an order outlining specific safety precautions for the voyage, including the use of an escort vessel. But Baluchi failed to meet them.

"This was an inherently unsafe voyage attempt that put the lives of Mr. Baluchi and other mariners in danger," Cpt. Austin Gould, commander of Coast Guard Sector Miami, said in a statement. "This proposed adventure unnecessarily risked the lives of Mr. Baluchi, the maritime public, and our Coast Guard men and women."

For his voyage, Baluchi was armed only with a GPS, satellite phone and video camera, and planned to "survive on protein bars, tuna, sea water purified through a filter, Gatorade and chewing gum for sea sickness," according to his website.

Both in its release and on Twitter, the Coast Guard all but berated Baluchi for his selfishness, which it says continues to come at the "enormous" expense of taxpayers. Ironically, as Baluchi proudly claims on his website, the attempted "life threatening journey at sea" was for charity.

Baluchi's 2014 attempt to "run" the Bermuda Triangle ended in similar defeat when the Coast

Guard found him 70 nautical miles east of St. Augustine, exhausted and “asking for directions to Bermuda.” That rescue, the Coast Guard said, cost taxpayers more than \$140,000, though Baluchi hoped the adventure would “raise money for children in need and ... inspire those that have lost hope for a better future.”

#BreakingNews Baluchi's 2014 attempt placed enormous financial burden on taxpayers for his rescue. He was recently ordered not to depart.

— USCGSoutheast (@USCGSoutheast) April 24, 2016

Baluchi could not be reached for comment Tuesday. His publicist Candace Rojas, however, told the Sun Sentinel that Baluchi was “disappointed about having to end” his trek, but “will definitely try again.” As for the Coast Guard warning, Rojas told the outlet that Baluchi had secured a support vessel to accompany him, but ultimately opted to make the trip by himself.

Rojas added that her understanding of the Coast Guard order was that it was a recommendation, not a mandate. But under federal law, violation of a Coast Guard order could result in criminal penalties, including up to 7 years in prison and \$40,000 in fines.

Baluchi is no first-time risk-taker. In 2007, he ran around the perimeter of the United States, covering more than 11,700 miles in 202 days.

Davis Hyslop, a businessman and one of Baluchi's supporters, told CNN in 2012 that his friend, an Iranian immigrant, simply doesn't listen to anyone. “He has these outsized ambitions that he sets his mind to,” Hyslop said. “He's a success above and beyond anyone's expectations. It's almost biblical. But you gotta be a little crazy to undertake such an endeavor, right?”

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Gun-runners, gang leaders ... and Max Factor: The stories behind Hull's statues

May 19th 2016

hulldailymail.co.uk

By Hull Daily Mail | Posted: October 31, 2015

*You might only give them a quick glance in passing. But behind Hull's statues are intriguing stories of gun-running, murder, global business empires – and sheer brass-necked cheek. **Will Ramsey** looks at the personalities behind the sculptures, from convicted murderer Jimmy Boyle, to the man who founded Max Factor.*

1) Sea Trek, Hull Marina



Immigrants fleeing persecution in Russia and Poland arrived by ship at Victoria Dock in twice weekly sailings from the Baltic ports. In one year alone, 1881, 50,000 immigrants stepped ashore in Hull, with most travelling on to Liverpool and then America. Among those said to have arrived in the city were Michael Marks, who established Marks & Spencer, and Maximillian Faktorowicz. After arriving in America, the latter changed his name to Max Factor and created the world-renowned

cosmetics company.

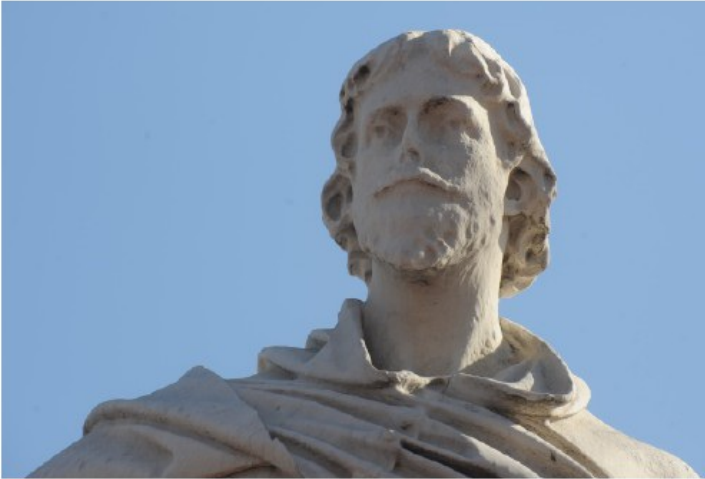
2) Man Under Threat, Queens Gardens



He's hunkered down in a quiet corner of Queens Gardens, but the history of its creator is far from peaceful. Installed in 1986, it was created by Jimmy Boyle, the Glasgow hard man sentenced to life in prison for the murder of fellow gangland figure William "Babs" Rooney. During his spell inside, on a conviction he has always denied, Boyle discovered art, and launched himself as a writer and sculptor on his release.

3) Sir William de la Pole, Victoria Pier

The wealthy wool merchant, and in 1332, Hull's first mayor, was also the man who bailed out the King. Sir William jointly managed the English Wool Company, set up by Edward III to



finance his wars with the Scots through control of the wool trade. After the scheme tanked, the King was forced to borrow £100,000 from Sir William, who also bagged the lordship of Holderness from the monarch for a bargain price.

4) Dr John Alderson, Hull Royal Infirmary

On his death in 1829, 15,000 people were said to have turned out to pay their respects. It was all to honour a man who had offered services to the infirmary, including vaccinating the poor against smallpox, for free. In life, Alderson had his share of personal tragedy. Soon after moving to Hull in 1805, the Norfolk-born doctor saw his wife, Sarah, and three of their daughters die within a few months of each other. *(Picture by Keith Parker).*



5) James Clay, Hull City Hall

The Liberal MP for Hull in five parliaments, Clay was a close friend of prime minister Benjamin Disraeli. Something of a flamboyant character, his love for music was passed down to his son, Frederic, who introduced the famed duo Gilbert and Sullivan to each other.



6) Sir Leo Schultz, Quay Street

The Hull City councillor – who saved countless lives by successfully campaigning for the council to build

bomb shelters in the Second World War – was a forthright character. He led a delegation to London to argue for civilian air raid sirens to be sounded at the same time as industrial ones. Herbert Morrison, the Minister of Supply, granted the request, but described him as a "thundering nuisance".

7) Voyage, Victoria Pier

This statue faces the direction Hull trawlers would take on their way to Iceland. Its sister



statue, For, in the Icelandic fishing settlement of Vik, stares back across the North Atlantic in the direction of Hull. The original was famously stolen in 2011 and had to be replaced.

8) Zachariah Pearson. Pearson Park

The generosity of this ship owner – who gifted the land for Pearson Park to the city – had its murkier side. Eager to bring back cotton from the Confederate States, blockaded during the American Civil War, he hatched a plan to run arms across the ocean to break the deadlock. Its failure led to his bankruptcy.



9) The Bears, Albany Street

Perched high above the street corner, near the junction with Spring Bank, these two sculptures are a nod back to Hull Zoological Gardens, a seven acre site which existed between 1840 and 1862. Among the big attractions – in every sense – was Hull's only elephant, alongside lions, tigers, kangaroos and polar bears.



10) Queen Victoria. Queen Victoria Square

The monarch was raised up a few years after her arrival in Hull city centre, so others could sit down. The statue, unveiled in May 1903, was later placed on a plinth, so new subterranean municipal lavatories could be installed.

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Halfway to Halloween: Walpurgisnacht is 'Witches' Night' | Dirge Magazine

dirgemag.com



Halfway to Halloween: Walpurgisnacht is 'Witches' Night'

- Culture

April 25, 2016



As you stand under the darkened sky on the eve of May, you may hear the rushing of bird or bat wing overhead, or witness the momentary blotting out of a constellation or two as they take flight. However,

they are neither bird nor bat – for tonight is Walpurgisnacht, and the sky is full of witches.

It was once unquestionably understood that witches lived among us, ever cunning and watchful. The good Christian, or at least those wishing to appear as such, lived their lives at the mercy of this belief. One must be ever vigilant and abide by the many rules and rituals that helped to safeguard good, God-fearing people. Extra care and protections were even more necessary on the night of April 30th, Walpurgisnacht or Hexennacht (Witches' Night) – the night that belonged to the witch.



Witches Sabbath – Francisco Goya

Defined as an individual who voluntarily entered into a pact with the devil and travelled by flying broomstick, or upon the backs of goats, or, rather unfortunate men. On Walpurgisnacht a witch's business would be exclusively conducted during the hours when darkness reigned. This "business" consisted of killing and feasting on children, but they also took time out to desecrate a few Christian symbols and take advantage of the careless or ill-prepared.

How though, did Walpurgisnacht come to be? No one is certain; however, the day has been influenced and molded by many different cultures and beliefs throughout the centuries and some modern day observances can still be found, particularly in Germany.

Celts referred to the eve of May as Cet Samhain – the opposite of Samhain or Halloween, as April 30th falls exactly six months after Samhain. It is believed that on these two nights the veil between the worlds separating the living and the dead – the seen and the unseen, thins, allowing devils, demons, and witches to mingle openly among us as they travel to their meeting places. Many of them will be on their way to The Broken, the highest mountain peak in Germany's Harz Mountains, surrounded by a deep, dark, and wild forest that is often shrouded in thick mists.

Mayday (May 1st) and All Soul's Day, (November 1st), are known as cross-quarter days, as they roughly fall between the equinox and solstice – a crossroads of the year, as it were. Since the days of Ancient Greece, it is Hecate, goddess of witchcraft, who stands guard at these crossroads. There, an unwitting traveller was likely to encounter ghosts and mischievous elementals, mysterious lights and music, witness the celebratory cavorting of witches and other beasties, and even be at risk of permanently losing their shadow.



Witches on the Sabbath – Luis Ricardo Falero

The classic German book for children, "The Little Witch," provides us with a rundown of exactly which witches were among Walpurgisnacht celebrants. There are mountain witches, wood witches, mist witches, marsh witches, storm witches, wind witches, flower witches, and herb witches. Each region seems to have their own witchy figure who presides over this important night.

In some European countries, it is Holda who rules the skies this night, as she flies over the spring fields with a horde of unbaptized children.

Many tales and traditions point to the figure of Walburga, who bears a crown and shoes of fire. It is said that she hides among the newly growing things in the fields or even within the small grains of wheat. In the days before Walpurgisnacht, the ghostly riders of the Wild Hunt have been seen pursuing her.



Photograph by William Mortensen

In France, there is Dame Blanche accompanied by her entourage of cats and owls. This white lady haunts bridges, thorn-filled ditches and smaller waterways. Incur her wrath and she will push you over a cliff, adorn your flesh with thorns, or simply allow her kitties to devour you.

Through the years, many springtime festivals have contributed and influenced Walpurgisnacht, such as the Roman's Floralia – a Medieval forest battle waged between King Winter and the May Queen. As dawn approached, the queen is triumphant and as legend

has it, human sacrifices were burned. In later years, effigies crafted from straw are thrown into the flames. Such rituals were practiced as a guarantee of wealth, health, and prosperity. To forego them would mean certain doom for you, your family, your livestock and crops.

Livestock were adorned with bouquets of herbs in hopes of repelling mischievous fairy folk. Exits and

entryways were protected in a similar vein – sometimes with crosses fashioned from the magical rowan or hawthorn tree.



Witches Flying To Sabbath – Bernard Zuber

In parts of Eastern Europe pitchforks of hay were set ablaze and waved about to frighten unwelcome spirits. Meanwhile, in Scotland, great bonfires were set in each village. Here, people gathered to dance around the fire commanding the flames to rise high enough to burn the witches flying overhead.

Noisemaking was often employed to scare away evil spirits, demons, and witches. Such practices are incorporated into various traditions throughout the world – from China with its fireworks, or the North American tradition of tying cans to a newly-wedded couple's car, to Western Europe with the reveling and banging of pots and pans to ring in the New Year. These traditions, along with pounding wooden boards on the ground, ringing the church bell, and the firing of guns are still widely practiced, although their purpose is largely forgotten.

Homes should also be protected against witchcraft and devilry. All brooms must be hidden away on Walpurgisnacht, lest a witch come and take it from you. Of course, you are never to allow a strange woman who knocks on your door inside the house. Instead, keep her busy by commanding her to count every blade of grass beyond your doorstep before you grant entry.

My own definition of a witch is a woman who wields wisdom, strength, and knowledge – all qualities equaling power – a magic in and of itself. So, on this Walpurgisnacht, I ask you to remember, honor, and respect witches and their place in the world, in our imaginations and most importantly, in ourselves.

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Sarah Troop

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Monday 16 May, 2016
THE JEWISH CHRONICLE ONLINE

What can I do if I am haunted by a dybbuk?

October 6, 2013

Question: A few weeks ago I started being pursued by an angry dybbuk who whispers curses at me and sometimes manifests itself as a menacing grey form. Please tell me how I can get rid of it. Is there anyone who knows how to perform an exorcism?

Rabbi Naftali Brawer

Even if one were to believe in the notion of a dybbuk, your symptoms do not fit its conventional description. A dybbuk, is a restless soul wandering between heaven and earth, which manifests itself in its victim's body, causing involuntary thoughts and actions. The fact that you perceive a grey form outside yourself indicates that it may be something else entirely.

The name dybbuk comes from the Hebrew root dybk, which means to cleave or cling, describing how the wandering, sometimes malevolent, soul cleaves to the individual it possesses. The concept of possession goes back to the Bible, which tells of King Saul being possessed by some sort of evil spirit which terrified him (I Samuel 16:14.).

However, there is no suggestion that the spirit was a wandering soul but rather some sort of demonic spirit — quite possibly the Bible's way of describing mental depression.

The idea of the dybbuk as a wandering soul, possessing the body of the living, makes its first appearance in Jewish literature only as late as the 16th century. The great Safed mystic Rabbi Isaac Luria contributed to the groundwork of this belief by asserting an earlier, and somewhat controversial, doctrine of the transmigration of souls or reincarnation, which is known in Kabbalah as gilgul.

Once the idea of souls travelling back to earth as gilgulim was accepted, it was not long before Rabbi Luria's disciples posited the idea of possession or dybbuk. But the dybbuk only gained widespread currency as the result of a play by that name penned by the 19th-century Russian Jewish author Shloime Zanvel Rappoport, popularly known by his nom de plume S. Ansky.

The great 20th-century historian of Jewish mysticism Gershom Scholem concluded that those complaining of dybbuk possession were most likely suffering from hysteria or schizophrenia. He was not alone in detecting a more prosaic cause for these symptoms.

When the late Satmar Rebbe, Rabbi Yoel Teitenbaum, visited Israel he was asked to exorcise a dybbuk. After examining the sufferer, the Rebbe is purported to have instructed that he be admitted to hospital and placed under the care of a physician.

I am neither a kabbalist nor a physician but I find it difficult to believe that an exorcist can help relieve your symptoms. My first port of call would be a trained mental health professional. I hope you find the peace of mind you so desperately seek.

Rabbi Jonathan Romain

I am sorry to hear that you are having such experiences. There will be many reading your question who will think you must be hallucinating; but whether the dybbuk is actual or imaginary, I know that for you it is real. I am also certain it must feel very threatening and distressing to sense the dybbuk around you.

At this point I should admit to being very torn in my reaction. On the one hand, I do not believe in physical dybbuks. I reckon that they are the workings of our inner stresses and turmoils, which can become so powerful that they seem to take on an external force.

On the other hand, I also know that there is much we do not understand about this world. It has never happened to me, but I do know individuals who are rational, stable and intelligent who have had sensory experiences that defy all explanation. It does not necessarily prove that there is a world of spirits, but it does oblige us not to be dismissive of the unknown.

However, I am concerned about your search for an exorcist. First, it can be very dangerous if someone who is in a state of extreme vulnerability puts control of their life in the hands of someone else.

When this happens with doctors, we know that they are trained, obliged to follow regulations, subject to monitoring and expected to have your best interests as their prime motivation. I am not certain this can be said of all those who claim to do exorcisms. Moreover, if spiritual healing is important to you, then it would be better to find a long-term religious home rather than a quick-fix operator.

My second objection to exorcism is that I am not sure if the incantations and rituals that the person will offer you will be sufficient to reach the root of your problem. It is clearly not a surface issue that you are encountering, but is something that will need in-depth analysis and will probably benefit from professional counselling.

So do pursue a religious approach, but rather than look for an exorcist, try to find a sympathetic rabbi, go to his or her synagogue, put down roots and become part of a life-affirming community. At the same time, approach your local surgery for a recommendation for psychological help. These two approaches will compliment each other.

Last updated: 2:45pm, October 6 2013

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Haunted by Old Stinker the Werewolf: Yorkshire's Bermuda Triangle

May 19th 2016

hulldailymail.co.uk

By Hull Daily Mail | Posted: October 31, 2015



EYES ON THE ROAD: 'Old Stinker' is said to haunt a road near Bridlington.

Watch out for the red-eyed beast. **Will Ramsey** talks to author **Charles Christian** about werewolves, zombies and other ghouls that can be found in Yorkshire's Weird Wolds.

One misty night in the 1960s, a lorry driver was making his way along a remote Wolds road.

As his vehicle trundled along, he glimpsed a pair of red eyes in the

murk. Seconds later, a "wolf-like creature" tried to smash its way through windscreen.

This report, says author Charles Christian, is a glimpse of the weird happenings within the Wold Newton Triangle, a place home to some of the country's strangest supernatural events.

"That part of the country was once infested with wolves," said Charles, whose book, *A Travel Guide To Yorkshire's Weird Wolds*, explores some of the area's horrifying tales.

"Up until the 18th century, there was still a wolf bounty for anyone killing them.

"It was known for the wolves to dig up the corpses from graveyards. From that sprung the idea that they are supernatural beings, who took the form of werewolves.

"There is the legend of a werewolf called Old Stinker – a great hairy beast with red eyes, who was so called because he had bad breath.

"When I was a child, I remember someone saying they would not drive along the road from Flixton to Bridlington after dark because of those fears.

"When people would glimpse what they thought was the rear lights of a car in front, it would instead reveal itself to be the red eyes of a wolf."

The area's problem was recognised in AD 937, when King Athelstan granted the building of a hostel to provide travellers with shelter from these attacks.

Anyone on the road through would have been particularly wary of Wolf-monath – the Saxon

name for January – when the creatures, starved of the easy-pickings of livestock, would turn on human prey.

"You were more likely to be eaten then than at any other time of year," Charles said.

The author, who grew up in Scarborough, became intrigued with the legends of the Wolds during his childhood.

On outings with his family, he learnt of the screaming skull of Burton Agnes Hall near Driffield. The skull, said now to be buried in the walls of the house, was that of Katherine Griffiths, the youngest daughter of the hall's owner.

Previous attempts to move it were said to have resulted in a series of ghostly happenings and noises.

"It was the 1950s, and the end of petrol rationing, so Sunday afternoons saw us going out on a drive to a stately home – that was when I first heard about the legend of the screaming skull," Charles said.

"I know that one of my mother's cousins would drive a long route around, just to avoid passing there at night.

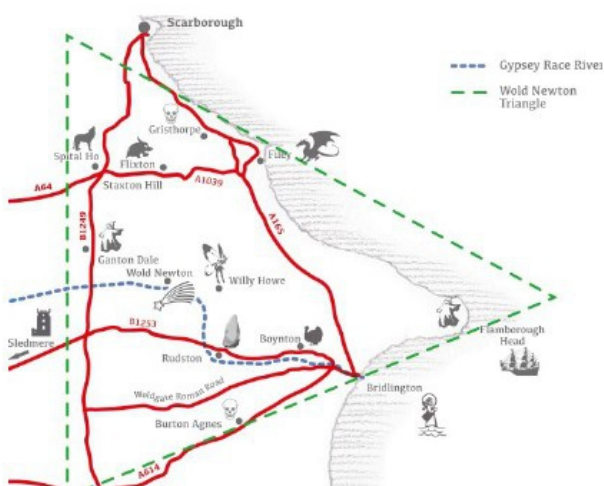
"When you're a child, things like that excite you."

The Norfolk-based author, familiar with the Wolds through his visits to Scarborough, returned to this interest after starting to write and publish books.

"It is a fascinating part of the country, but one that most people just zoom through," Charles said.

"It is so rich in folklore, but so little is known about it elsewhere."

Yorkshire's Weird Wolds focuses on what Charles calls the Wold Newton Triangle, centred around the East Yorkshire village.



Inspired both by the meteorite strike near the village in 1795 – reportedly one of the largest to hit England – and other sites of supernatural events, including, of course, the Bermuda Triangle, this area's unsettling history runs back thousands of years.

Among the places mentioned is Rudston, which, with evidence dating back some 3,500 to 4,000 years, claims to be the longest continuously inhabited village in England,

• How Hull was gripped by a Satanic Panic

The village's monolith, a site of worship for the ancient Beaker people, was said to have been a demonic thunderbolt hurled by the Devil himself at the nearby church.

"In its day, with everyone living in single-storey dwellings, it would have been like seeing the London Eye," said Charles.

"It was a focal point in the way Stonehenge was, it was such an important ritual site."

The Ancient Britons – and not so ancient Britons – were also intrigued by the Gypsy Race, a watercourse that flows through the centre of the Wold Newton Triangle into the sea at Bridlington.

"Because it runs through chalk, and it rises with heavy rain, one day there would be an empty bank, and the next day a torrent," Charles said.

"As the Ancient Britons didn't know much about geology, they thought of it as a mystical phenomenon – the Waters of Woe.

"It is an element of people being wise with hindsight, but it was said the waters would run the year before a major disaster.

"It flowed before the start of the English Civil War, before King Charles I lost his head, before the Great Fire of London and the First and Second World Wars.

"Of course, it could be coincidence, but it is more fun to think there is a connection."

Charles hasn't been the only author fascinated with these tales.

Among them was the Bridlington-born William Parvus, later William of Newburgh, a monk who wrote the History Of English Affairs.

William, who chronicled life until his death in 1198, was one of the first English authors to write about revenants – the living dead.

"Some of them were like vampires, others like zombies," said Charles.

"There's a tale of two villagers in the north tracking one of these creatures back to its grave, draining it of its blood, chopping it up and burning it."

One of the zombie-like creatures William described rose from his grave, and tried to climb into bed with his understandably unhappy wife. After that, the creature took to walking about in daylight.

"He thus became," wrote William, with admirable understatement, "a serious nuisance."

For Charles, it's all part of a glimpse into the strangeness that lurks in the hills and valleys of the Wolds.

"It is a gem of heritage and folklore, all in a relatively small area," he said.

"It seems there is something magical about this part of the world."

- Visit www.urbanfantasist.com



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TRAVELOGUE OF TERROR

TRAVELOGUE OF TERROR — HELL, MICHIGAN
BY LISA LADOUCEUR



The road to Hell is paved. Well, if you drive there, it is.

Oh, sure, you could spend your life engaged in premarital sex, reading gory comics and worshipping satanic rock 'n' roll and hope your preacher and your daddy are right, that you'll find your way there after death all by yourself. But why wait when you can simply pack up the car and take a road trip to Hell... Michigan?

For our gang of travellers — one hippie chick, a classic rocker and me, the resident goth girl — it seemed a no-brainer detour on a long drive from Toronto to Chicago. I mean, when you notice the word Hell on a map, how can you not make a point of going? Located approximately 66 miles west of Detroit in a large swath of green called the Pinckney State Recreation Area, the tiny town is not exactly an attraction worthy of giant highway billboards, which we were hoping would make a fun pictorial as we wound our way there. Instead, as we turned off I-96 and headed southbound we wondered if we were in the right place — the area is not at all hellish, just too-pretty rolling hills and scenic lakes. To better set the mood, we searched our iPods for relevant songs, scrambling together a playlist that ultimately included

AC/DC's "Highway to Hell," Meatloaf's "Bat Out of Hell," Elvis' "(You're the) Devil in Disguise" and Mötley Crüe's "Shout at the Devil." And then, upon arriving in the town of Pinckney (just after passing Hooker Road, a dead-end street, ironically enough), we spotted our first sign for Hell. A quick left turn, and we were off, hooting hysterically.

As it turns out, you best not speed through Hell, or you just might miss it. The population is 72. Where they live I am not sure, as there are only two streets. It's not even a town, more like a strip in the middle of the country. (Legally, it's an "unincorporated community.") But in its two square miles, Hell packs in enough devilish kitsch to make it a kind of mini Halloweentown. The three shops on this main drag cajole visitors with goofy signs: "Welcome to Hell... Awesome Food!" claims Hell in a Handbasket, home to Hell's Kitchen pizza parlour and the infamous Hell Post Office, where we plan to stamp our postcards as proof of our visit. That's if we make it out alive from Screams, the local ice cream shop located next to the oh-so-terrifying Hell mini-putt.

It really is hot in Hell on this summer afternoon, and so it makes sense that Screams be our first stop. The trademark treat there is the "Grave Digger," a banana split shaped like a corpse and covered with "bat hearts," "fruit guts" and "ectoplasm." (Actually strawberries, gummy worms and chocolate sauce.) But it's not the coffin-shaped make-your-own sundae station that gets us to

take our wallets out, it's the wall-to-wall spooky merchandise for sale. Besides the tacky T-shirts (slogans include "I've Been to Hell and Back"), coffee mugs, magnets and keychains "From Hell," there's a whole Halloween gift shop, filled with lovely pumpkin- or tombstone-shaped tree ornaments, batty black candles, spiderweb table linens and the like. And if you can find a greater assortment of horror-themed rubber duckies — from vampires, mummies and witches to the Ghostface killer — I'd like to see it.

Inside Screams, you can learn about the history of Hell. Seems the place was founded in the 1800s by an entrepreneur named George Reeves, who settled on the banks of a river now known as Hell Creek and built a mill and other businesses for local farmers. He also made moonshine, and some say it was the tendency for wives to exclaim, "he's gone to Hell!" when asked where their truant husbands had run off to, which gave the spot its name. Another legend has it that, in 1841, Reeves was asked by the State what they should call the town and he replied, "Call it Hell for all I care." In addition, Wikipedia offers a couple more possible explanations, that the area was hellish due to the mosquitoes from the ample wetlands, or that a couple of German travellers arrived one day and proclaimed "So schön hell!" ("So beautifully bright!") and the name stuck after being overheard by locals.

Regardless of the plausibility or origin of the name, why let history get in the way of a good tourist trap, right? And Hell knows how to reel 'em in. Visitors can spend their money buying a diploma from Damnation University, a fictional institution that issues certificates in goofball degrees for not very horror-themed vocations such as Internet Navigation, Red Meat Consumption and Duct Tapeology. Or, there's the even more popular gift from Hell, the Mayor for a Day program. Being Mayor of Hell (\$100) gets you a set of devil horns, an official badge and T-shirt, and keys to the town. You can also expect phone calls throughout the day about town emergencies, culminating with the news that you've been impeached. After seriously considering it,



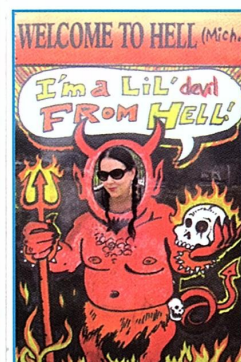
we opt instead to simply snap our photos in front of the "Mayor for a Day" sign while we enjoy our Buttersnot and Scare-a-Mel ice cream on a walk through the grounds to check out the creek, where yet another cheeky sign implores visitors to not pee in the river as "it's going through Hell right now." We can't help but notice a dozen motorbikes parked in front of the local pub, the Dam Site Inn, and wonder if it's a hot spot for Hell's Angels.

Of course, one of the main goals of our visit was to send mail from Hell, so we head over to the post office, which offers a rather unique service. The attendant will not only stamp your mail with a cool Hell postmark, he will use a candle flame to scorch the edges for that extra level of authenticity. Once that's done, you could rent a kayak or dine on some suicide chicken wings but we figure with the sun going down it's best to take our Exit Visas (issued at Screams) and other scary souvenirs and get the hell outta Hell before it's too late!

So was it worth the detour? For an afternoon of spooky silliness with not much effort, we thought so. Plus, it's not every day that you get to say you've escaped from Hell so easily. There may not be all that much to keep you here for an extended holiday, but there are special events to justify a dedicated visit. There's an annual run that goes through the town that provides entrants with "I Ran Thru Hell" T-shirts, as well as a yearly bike tour through the area called "One Helluva Ride." But the most exciting – and possibly punny – is the Just Hearse'N Around car club's Last Rides Reunion, which is the biggest gathering of death cabs in the state. It happens yearly on the third Saturday in September. The last meet set a Guinness World Record for the Largest Parade of Hearses, by having 51 of 'em bumper to bumper.

And October, naturally, is filled with children's programs, from ghost story telling to costume contests. But if you really want to experience something special, you could pop by in the winter, when temperatures in Hell sometimes reach -25°C . Yep, it seems Hell really does freeze over.

Screams Ice Cream from Hell is open April to November, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday, Saturday and Sunday. For additional info, or to purchase a Mayor for the Day package, visit hell2u.com.



To The Devil A Town: (clockwise from top) One of Hell's many pun-filled signs, a selection of kitschy souvenirs, Liisa tries to blend in with the locals, the sign for the town's ice cream shop, the Hell post office, and (opposite) a billboard beckons tourists.

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Oddity: High School Art Mistakenly Appraised for \$50,000

cfileonline.org



Oddity | High School Art Project Mistakenly Appraised at \$50,000

Oddity | High School Art Project Mistakenly Appraised at \$50,000

05.05.16

SPOKANE, Washington — Let the following story serve as a warning to all of you. Art is not a science, no matter how knowledgeable you are. Knowing that and using it to keep yourself in check could save you a lot of embarrassment in the future.

Consider this wince-worthy clip of *The Antiques Roadshow* on PBS, the television program that convinced a generation of grandparents that every dusty attic in the Midwest contained a treasure trove of long lost Rembrandt paintings. You're probably familiar with the show, but to recap: owners of antiques bring their belongings to experts who appraise them. You may very well learn that a grotesque clay jug you found covered with chicken droppings in the corner of a barn could sell for up to \$50,000, as Alvin Barr of Oregon did.

Or, again like Alvin Barr, you may find out that your appraiser was horribly mistaken and that the jug was actually the work of Betsy Soule, a horse trainer who made the work as part of a high school ceramics class in the 1970s.

Note: Unfortunately, the following video was set to private after I posted this article. That's too bad because, more than anything, it shows how the appraisal was an honest mistake. The logic is sound, even if the conclusion it reaches is incorrect. It makes myself and many of our readers question the seemingly arbitrary nature of the value we assign to artwork. Until I find a replacement video, I'll leave this embedded here in the hopes that whoever set it to private will allow us to have this discussion.

The jug was appraised by Stephen L. Fletcher, a partner, executive vice president and chief auctioneer director with American Furniture and Decorative Arts. My journalism training usually demands that I roll my eyes at any professional title longer than a word or two, but here the credentials actually serve a purpose. Even with all of his training, Fletcher reached a little too far and got smacked down by the hairy knuckled, calloused hand of Hubris. After the program aired Soule contacted the show's producers and proved that she was the creator of the jug.

Fletcher wrote a corrected version of his appraisal. I'm projecting, but it's hard to read this without picturing the author breathless and nervously shifting his weight from side to side. I mean, how could he not? He went from comparing the work to a Picasso to saying it's fine for a *high school student*.

After a couple of decades of Roadshow seasons, I note that each city presents new opportunities for discoveries and learning experiences. The grotesque glazed redware pot I saw and admired in Spokane is unlike any other example I have seen. We have sold at auction several examples from the 19th century — all of which are from the eastern half of the United States, and have a single grotesque face — some for five figures. This example, with its six grotesque faces, was modeled or sculpted with considerable imagination, virtuosity and technical competence. This mysterious piece was reportedly found at an

estate sale, covered with dust, straw, and chicken droppings, and purchased for \$300. As far as its age is concerned, I was fooled, as were some of my colleagues. Alas, among the millions of people who watch Antiques Roadshow faithfully was a woman who identified herself as being a friend of the maker, a lady named Betsy Soule! She created this in [1973 or '74], while in high school! The techniques of making pottery, in many ways, haven't changed for centuries. Obviously, I was mistaken as to its age by 60 to 80 years. I feel the value at auction, based on its quality and artistic merit, is in the \$3,000-\$5,000 range. Still not bad for a high schooler in Oregon.

This isn't to make fun of Fletcher, far from it. His re-appraisal is like watching someone smack their thumb with a hammer: you feel it, too. I write about art between two to four times a day, meaning there are plenty of opportunities to stick my foot in my mouth. I imagine that many of our readers are in similar positions. It's a danger special to our professions, the risk of making mistakes in front of groups of people. This story is supremely effective as a cautionary tale.



*Betsy Soule shows some of her other high school art projects.
Photograph by Ryan Brennecke of The Bulletin.*

The story hangs a lampshade on the arbitrary nature of the marketplace. Why is a skilled work of art, one that prompted a comparison to Picasso, worth just a tenth of its perceived value after the artist was identified? In the leadup to Fletcher's \$50,000 appraisal at no point did he attempt to guess who the maker was. How could he say for certain? Fletcher and Barr didn't even check the jug for a stamp. The work could have been made by anyone, but once a face was put to the work, the perceived value of the jug evaporated. Why? Does it lose value because it's dated much later than initially thought? or is it taboo to suggest that an outsider is capable of operating within the artistic sphere? There is evidence for both in the re-appraisal, but I can only guess, which is fair because guessing is the central conceit of the

Antiques Roadshow.

I'll leave out the backhanded "for a high school student" qualifier and say that I enjoy Soule's work. The twisting, shoggoth-like transitions between the faces is the stuff of nightmares. I love gross, aggressive art because it's reassuring to know that other people see the faces, too. I also like her quote for the Register Guard newspaper. She's not Picasso, but Soule certainly talks like someone who has the touch.

"Soule said she was amazed to learn something she made in high school could be worth even what Barr paid for it. At the time she made it, she was unfamiliar with the style of jugs the appraiser referenced on the show and was just sculpting what came to her in her imagination.

"I was just a really passionate, artistic kid," she said. "I don't know where those faces came from; they just came roaring out of me onto those pots."

Someone should reach out to Barr and offer to buy the jug, then kick some more money to Soule to compensate her for her work. That would be a great way to put a bow on this whole mess.

Bill Rodgers is the Managing Editor of *cfile.daily*.

Do you love or loathe this \$50,000 work of contemporary ceramic art? Let us know in the comments.

05.05.16Categories: All Topics, Art, contemporary ceramic art, Contemporary Ceramics, Marketplace,

Oddity Tags: antiques, antiques roadshow, contemporary ceramic art, contemporary ceramics, marketplace, pbs, spokane, washington

Bill Rodgers is a reformed journalist living in Santa Fe, New Mexico. A lover of nontraditional storytelling, he explores the role of narrative in art. Bill is Managing Editor of cfile.

2 thoughts on "Oddity | High School Art Project Mistakenly Appraised at \$50,000"

1. Linus Ersson

05.06.16 at 12:47 pm

Love it, and I am perfectly fine with value of \$50.000 at that moment. It's the context that makes the art, not always it's maker.

2. Rob Hunter

05.06.16 at 11:54 am

Thank you for your story. In March 2012, I bought an ca. 1860 Edgefield face vessel from Skinner's auction for \$56,000. The auction estimate had been \$800-1200. When this face vessel appear on the Road Show and subsequently on Social Media, it was clear that was an amateurish 20th century creation using the grogged commercial clays some commonly in art centers and high school.

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Owners give racehorse the excellent name of Horsey McHorseface

usatoday.com

<http://ftw.usatoday.com/2016/04/horsey-mchorseface-boaty-mcboatface>

FORTHEWIN

For The Win



USA Today Sports

Owners give racehorse the excellent name of Horsey McHorseface



160415110010-horsey-mchorseface-exlarge-169

public poll in Britain for the name of a research vessel, by naming a two-year-old gelding Horsey McHorseface.

From CNN:

Australian horse owner Joe Rosetti came up with the amusing spin off, quickly convincing his co-owner Bjorn Baker, a trainer at Sydney's Warwick Farm racecourse.

"We had a laugh about it in the office and thought, 'Hey, why not'," racing manager Jake Bruce told CNN. "Joe's a good bloke and he's a good horse — we just thought it would be a good fit."

The horse will make its racing debut in May, and the smart money is to bet everything you have on him. (Just kidding, please do not do that.)

Owners give racehorse the excellent name of Horsey McHorseface

Horse Racing

Owners give racehorse the excellent name of Horsey McHorseface

By Nate Scott April 15, 2016 9:51 am

Boaty McBoatface, you've started a trend.

Australian horse owners paid homage to the name, which was chosen in a

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The House of the Faceless People in Weird Hauntings and Weird Encounters Forum

yuku.com

The House of the Faceless People

Author	Comment		
JD McNasty	The House of the Faceless People	Lead	[-]
	Tags : None		
Nov 3 07 10:45 AM	This was in Weird New England...I believe Connecticut...it was about an abandoned house that supposedly houses mysterious people that never come out, and a caretaker's light can sometimes be seen through a boarded up window there. I was very intrigued by this....is there anyone who can give more information on this, whether you know how to get there or you know more about the legend? Thanks		
Jodhiay	Re: The House of the Faceless People	#1	[-]
	I'll have to look up the story: I don't recall this one.		
Nov 5 07 8:28 PM	Anyone else? ...}<(((((> ...><((((*>		
JD McNasty	Re: The House of the Faceless People	#2	[-]
	books.google.com/books?id...8#PPA64,M1		
Nov 9 07 2:32 AM	This was all I could find online....it's just a screenshot of the actual page from the book (go to page 64). It's in Monroe, Connecticut.		
	I really am dying to know more about this....anyone with info, please share!		
PinkLady2004	Re: The House of the Faceless People	#3	[-]
	I work in Monroe, and have seen pretty much all there is to be seen, as far as historical houses and old cemeteries go.		
	There are very few ostentatious Victorian houses there, and most are restored and maintained nicely.		
	I had to rethink this, and there IS a house that kind of resembles the one in the picture, but it is not stuck in the middle of a field or swamp. It's on a main road, and on the outskirts, near the next town.		
Dec 4 07 11:18 PM	I have to recheck my cache of pictures. If it's the one I'm thinking of, I think the barns around it are used to store tractors for some company or maybe the town. The house itself looks empty but neat enough, and was rather pretty, once. There was some graffiti on it, but I never heard of "faceless people" or "melonheads" over there.		
	(Besides, those legendary unfortunates all live in the woods a few blocks from me!)		

Who would've thought that hell really exists? And that it would be in New Jersey!--
Futurama

PinkLady2004Re: The House of the Faceless People

#4 [-]

Checked my pictures (I have this very loose filing system) and no such luck. The derelict town abodes I have pictures of don't really resemble the picture in the book. They all have simpler designs compared to that one, which bears no resemblance to any building currently standing that I'm familiar with. (Monroe, being mostly a farming town rather than a shipping/manufacturing center, had few moguls who would have built something that elaborate.)

PERHAPS there was something like that, once, but there has been, regrettably I must say, some demolition of older buildings in the last 30 years, along the main drags.

Dec 5 07
11:58 PM

A couple of weeks ago I DID try driving down a long, narrow, winding extension of an old road, which must have been the driveway into a large farm (which soon unnerved me, due to the fact that my clutch was starting to fail. Don't worry, though, it's fixed now, and so is my bank account, grumble-grumble.) I guess that WOULD answer part of the description of the storied location.

Alas, I only found a new clutch of McMansions down there, where, I presume, an older home and barns once stood. So there you have it, but I'll check around again anyway when I have some free time.

Who would've thought that hell really exists? And that it would be in New Jersey!--
Futurama

JD McNasty Re: The House of the Faceless People

#5 [-]

Thank you very much!

The picture is only from '05 or '06, how new are those housing developments?

Jan 3 08 3:05
PM

It saddens me to think that a place like that could have been demolished. Even if we can't find the house, I just really want to know where the legend they talk about came from, what incidents started it, you know?

But thanks for the help
I found this...

Hvnzfire

#6 [-]

Aug 10 14
5:48 PM <http://urbanpostmortem.wordpress.com/2013/02/07/faceless-people-and-vanishing-houses-a-deeper-look-at-a-local-legend/comment-page-1/#comment-3650>

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How animal poop could be key in solving echidna mystery

sciencenews.org

ScienceNews

MAGAZINE OF THE SOCIETY FOR SCIENCE & THE PUBLIC
Science Newsby Sarah Zielinski
2:30pm, April 26, 2016

Long-beaked echidnas are rare today, found only in Papua New Guinea and on a few Indonesian islands. The species may still be lurking in Australia, but no one is sure.

Gunnar Creutz/Wikimedia Commons (CC-BY-SA 4.0)



skeleton of a long-beaked echidna

Echidnas are some of the oddest animals you'll ever see, more closely related to a platypus than anything else, as the only other mammals that lay eggs. There are four living species: Short-beaked echidnas — about the size of a house cat and covered in spikes — are common

throughout Australia and in Papua New Guinea, where three long-beaked species live.

One of those species, the western long-beaked echidna, which is larger and has fewer spines than the short-beaked variety, used to live in Australia. Scientists have found fossils of the species, and aboriginal people who lived near Darwin in north central Australia painted the echidnas on rocks more than 10,000 years ago. The long-beaked echidnas then disappeared sometime after that, scientists have thought.

There are hints, though, that the species still exists in Australia. In 2012, Kristofer Helgen of the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History and colleagues reported in *Zookeys* that an echidna skull and skin housed in the National History Museum in London belonged to a western long-beaked echidna collected by John Thomas Tunney, who gathered specimens for the Western Australian Museum in Perth at the turn of the last century.



The skin of the echidna John Thomas Tunney collected in 1901 now sits in the collections of the Natural History Museum

According to the specimen's tags, Tunney had collected the animal on November 20, 1901, at Mount Anderson in the Western Kimberley region of Australia. Originally identified as a short-beaked echidna, museum scientists decided it was a *Zaglossus bruijnii*, a western long-beaked echidna, after removing and examining the animal's skull. They then put the skull and skin away in a drawer; the animal was forgotten for decades until Helgen happened upon it. He and his team then examined specimen and decided that, yes, it was indeed a western long-beaked echidna. And, after examining the documentation attached to the animal's remains, they determined that the echidna wasn't mislabeled; it had most likely had been collected by Tunney in Australia. Perhaps the species was still living on the continent, they posited.

That wasn't their only evidence. The researchers also recounted the tale of an encounter that one member of the team, James Kohen of Macquarie University in Australia, had with an aboriginal woman in the Kimberley region in 2001: While walking together, they noticed some

in London. K.M. Helgen et al/Zookeys 2012, Wikimedia Commons (CC-BY-SA 3.0) K.M. Helgen et al/Zookeys 2012, Wikimedia Commons (CC-BY-SA 3.0) K.M. Helgen et al/Zookeys 2012, Wikimedia Commons (CC-BY-SA 3.0)

poop, which the woman correctly identified as belonging to an echidna. She then told the scientist that her grandmothers “used to hunt the other one,” a much larger echidna that had not been seen for ages. Perhaps that meant that the woman’s actual grandmothers had hunted long-beaked echidnas — or maybe it was a tale told over many generations, and it was long-ago ancestors. Or maybe no one hunted long-beaked echidnas at all.

“We realize that, despite our conclusions,” the team writes, “others may remain skeptical of this *Zaglossus* specimen’s association with Tunney’s tags. Additional studies of this remarkable specimen might include analyses of ancient DNA, stable isotopes, and trace elements to test its origins and the context of its collection.”

To truly confirm that the long-beaked echidna is roaming modern-day Australia, scientists would have to find the animals in Australia. Though maybe not, biologist Adrian Burton notes in the April *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*.

Tunney never found a second echidna specimen; if he had, it would have been in the museum because he was contracted to supply them with one. But finding it would have been a huge undertaking, Burton writes. “To acquire a second specimen, Tunney would have been doomed to work for hours on end, laying traps and seeking out the shuffling creature among the rocky gullies and evergreen rainforest patches around [Mount] Anderson. And he may never have come any closer than stumbling upon a few scats.”

Today, though, those scats would be all researchers would need, Burton suggests. They could compare the DNA in the echidna poop to the DNA of animals living in New Guinea and genetic material gathered from the specimen in the London museum. If they all matched, then that would be proof that the species still lives in Australia.

No scientists have managed to get funding, however, for an expedition to the region where Tunney collected his echidna, Burton notes. That probably shouldn’t be all that surprising. The evidence that the long-beaked echidna lives in Australia today is pretty iffy, and the country has experienced severe cuts in funding for science in recent years. Echidna enigmas aren’t a priority.

But perhaps, just perhaps, these spiky, worm-eating creatures are still hiding out in some forest, waiting for someone to find them — or at least their poop.

1719 N Street, N.W. , Washington, D.C. 20036|202.785.2255

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Source URL: <https://www.sciencenews.org/blog/wild-things/how-animal-poop-could-be-key-solving-echidna-mystery>

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Hull's horrible history: Nine grisly events from plague and pirates to murder and torture

May 19th 2016

hulldailymail.co.uk

By Hull Daily Mail | Posted: May 03, 2015



Hull's horrible history: Cholera, left, airship disaster, top right and plague, lower right

Murder, war and plague – Will Ramsey takes a look back at Hull's gruesome past. Here are nine grisly episodes from Hull's horrible history.



1 Cholera epidemic hits Hull

In 1849, teams of men dug graves both day and night as the cholera swept through Hull over three terrible months. Tar barrels were burnt in the street in a vain attempt at disinfection, but almost 2,000 people lost their lives – among them Hull's greatest maritime painter, James Ward. Spring Bank Cemetery, where 700 were laid to rest, was over-whelmed. The Reverend James Sibree, the cemetery's chaplain, interred 43 bodies on one particularly grim day. At points, the queue of funeral corteges was said to have stretched back to Blundell's Corner.



2 Catholic persecution in the Tudor age

A grim fate awaited Catholics imprisoned in Hull's castle during the Tudor era. History records that one unfortunate Mr Horsley suffered two spells of imprisonment. On his second stay, his ears were cut off by his captors and he eventually starved after being intermittently fed on crusts. After his death, his body was left for so long in the cell that rats had eaten his face.

3 The plague wipes out thousands of lives

The plague had visited Hull before. In 1478, more than 1,500 people died. A century later, another virulent spell saw Blackfriargate, where the sickness was centred, walled up to prevent its spread. All this paled in



comparison with the outbreak of 1635, when the whole town was placed in quarantine. The sickness held sway for three years and grass grew in the deserted streets. The town gates were shut, with watchmen receiving provisions. More than 2,700 people were known to have died in Hull, with a similar number said to have died after fleeing to the countryside. By its end, the plague had wiped out half of Hull's population.

4 The only woman hanged at Hull Prison

She tried to blame the corned beef. Arthur, Ethel Major's husband, had been killed by something he'd eaten. But rather than bad meat, it was the strychnine Ethel had added to his evening meal. Unsurprisingly, this Lincolnshire murderess – who suspected him of having an affair – quickly arranged his funeral. The discovery that her neighbour's dog had been killed with the same technique proved her undoing. In 1934, Ethel became the last murderer and the only woman to be hanged at Hull Prison. Her ghost is said to haunt the prison.



5 Pirates meet a grim fate on the Humber

Pirates – lured by the wealth of Hull's ships – had been infesting the waters beyond the town during the 16th century. A fightback was initiated by the town's magistrates, who bought two ships to protect the Humber and the East Coast. One pirate ship, cornered near Skegness, led to the crew convicted of piracy at a hearing in Hull. Fifteen of the pirates were hanged together, with six of their bodies hung in chains along the banks of the Humber.



6 Hull under siege during the Civil War

Daring to defy the king during the Civil War led to a harsh punishment for the citizens of Hull. Inhabitants had faced volleys of cannonballs – some of which had been heated in flames before firing – over a six-week period. After the lifting of the siege, Holy Trinity Church was so full of the dead that there was no room for any more burials.

7 Boat explodes in Humber Dock Basin

A horrifying accident occurred in June 1836, when the boiler exploded on a steam packet in Humber Dock Basin. Thirteen lives were lost when The Union, which had been crowded with people, suffered a major malfunction in the engine room. The force of the explosion was such that one passenger was blown on to the roof of a nearby warehouse.



8 Airship disintegrates above the Humber

It was a tragedy witnessed by thousands. The R38 airship (above), on a test flight from Howden airbase, exploded above the Humber on August 24, 1921, and plunged into the estuary. Only five survived from the crew of 49 in the airship, which had been commissioned as a military craft. The crash was due to high-speed turns that proved too stressful for the fuselage, causing it to break in two and crash off Victoria Pier.

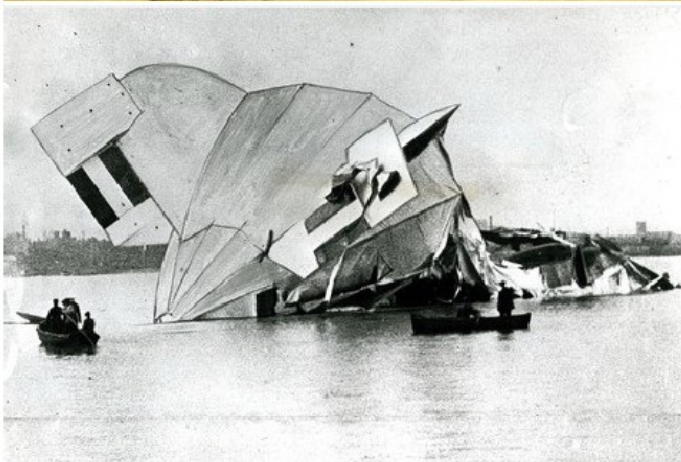


9 Hanged for treachery against the King

It was a grisly end for Sir Robert Constable. The aristocrat had helped lead the Pilgrimage of Grace – a popular uprising against Henry VIII's split from the Catholic Church, which had broken out in Yorkshire in 1536. Convicted of treason, he was hanged in chains over Beverley Gate, Hull, on July 6, 1537. His fate wasn't short on spectators, with the hanging arranged for Friday, Hull's market day.

3 comments

- zacklaws | May 03 2015, 4:34PM



Three more for Hull's horrible history, February 1927, head on train crash at Paragon train station, 12 dead. The Blitz WW1 and the Blitz WW2.

- UrbanReader1 | May 03 2015, 9:03AM

More (in general) on cholera and plague at <http://tinyurl.com/npej5cc>

- laserlite | May 03 2015, 7:07AM

The good olde days!!!!

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Hull's most haunted shops

May 19th 2016

hulldailymail.co.uk

By Hull Daily Mail | Posted: September 05, 2015

Ever heard of the ghost of Boyes, or the phantom flusher of St Andrew's Quay? Faye Preston talks to Mike Covell about Hull's most haunted shops ...

1) House of Fraser (the old Hammonds site), Ferensway



From the outside there is nothing to suggest this typical-looking department store holds hidden secrets. The fact its predecessor was destroyed in the Blitz during the Second World War (pictured above) is not one of them. But do people know of Herman the German? Nicknamed by staff, the ghost could be the victim of that fateful night. To this day, there is not a single record of the remains of people inside being recovered.

Although it was rumoured for years that a German bomber took out the building by flying into it, the myth was later debunked.

2) Prospect Shopping Centre



Another modern building holding history few will know. Since 1979, shop staff, including those at Boots and WHSmith, have reported seeing and hearing white figures of women and crying children in the stock rooms. Cleaners have reported wet footprints that, when mopped, would return. Another staff member could smell baby vomit. Could these be the spirits of patients at the original site of Hull General Infirmary? The hospital (pictured above in 1971) opened in September 1784 and served

during both the First and Second World Wars and a cholera epidemic.

3) Princes Quay Shopping Centre

To look at the shopping centre today, it is hard to imagine it being the scene of death. But its

dockside location means it was once a perilous place. Between the dock opening in 1829 and 1900, there were more than 1,000 deaths recorded, including that of William Willis who was knocked over the edge by an over-excited dog in 1849. It is hardly surprising then, when the centre opened in 1991, it wasn't long before security staff started reporting unusual activity at night, including metallic alarm bells sounding from the top floor and doors banging into the night.

4) Boots & The Works, Whitefriargate

As one of the more historic streets in the city, its placing among the most haunted should not come as a surprise. Where Boots and The Works stand today, was once the magnificent Neptune Inn, a George Pycock building, that between 1815 and 1913, was used by the Hull Customs. Shops then moved into the ground floor.

To this day, staff at Boots and The Works have reported seeing a man sitting at a desk as if he is writing in a ledger – in the same room the clerks of Hull Customs were once based.

5) British Heart Foundation shop, Whitefriargate

Today's British Heart Foundation shop was once owned by Bethel Jacobs, a Jewish watchmaker. When he died, his shop was transferred to gold and silversmith Thomas Kirk, who remained there for many years. Staff at his shop reported how the stock room would be tidied and locked at night but by morning would be in a state of disarray. The identity of the phantom ransacker has never been solved.

6) Boyes in Holderness Road, east Hull

Once the Savoy Theatre, built in 1923, this was another Second World War casualty – which could account for the sighting of a tall dark figure.

At 9.35pm on March 17, 1945, the air raid sirens sounded as a German bomber soared up the River Hull and headed towards Holderness Road. Panic-struck, thousands fled for shelters but, within ten minutes, bombs rained down on Nornabell, Barnsley, Holland and Morrill Streets. By the time first responders arrived at the scene, the dead and injured lay on Holderness Road. Could the tall figure seen in Boyes be the ghost of a Savoy Theatre bombing victim?

7) Boyes at North Point Shopping Centre in Bransholme

Perhaps the spookiest encounter on the list is the mysterious sighting of a Second World War airman by a security guard. The guard watched his colleague patrolling the store on the CCTV monitor and, as he did, saw a mysterious figure, dressed in uniform, walk up to his colleague from behind and then walk away. Convinced the figure was real, he asked his workmate who he was, only to be told there had been no one there. Neither security guard knew the centre was built on Hull's Balloon Command Centre, which was active between 1938 and 1959.

8) St Andrew's Retail Park, Hessle Road, west Hull

This area is no stranger to dark deeds – none more so than triple murderer William "Billy" Burkitt, who killed three women in 1915, 1925 and 1939. Against this backdrop, Mike Covell had a paranormal encounter of his own. In 2001, he was working as a security guard at the retail park. One night, he and his colleagues heard shoeboxes being emptied and launched across the store room. Fearing a thief, a guard called the police, who raced to the scene. Batons drawn, the police burst in, only to find nothing but boxes thrown all over the room.

9) St Andrew's Retail Park – again

Not all ghosts mean dark goings on. During another shift at St Andrew's Retail Park, Mike and his workmates heard banging coming from the empty and locked shop next door. They headed around the back of the store, only to find the place empty and the sound of a toilet flushing – was it a ghost or a trespasser caught short? To this day he is still unable to explain the identity of the phantom flusher.



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Hull's Satanic Panic: How a sinister fear gripped city in 1980s and 90s

May 19th 2016

hulldailymail.co.uk

By Hull Daily Mail | Posted: October 31, 2015



SHOCK: Reports in the Hull Daily Mail from the 1980s and 1990s revealing the fear in the city.



Hull's Satanic Panic: How a sinister fear gripped city in 1980s and 90s

- SHOCK: Reports in the Hull Daily Mail from the 1980s and 1990s revealing the fear in the city.
- DIGGING DEEPER: Mike Covell has investigated the panic that gripped Hull in the 1980s and 1990s over satanic cults.
-

In the 1980s and 1990s, a sinister fear gripped the people of Hull. Faye Preston speaks to local historian Mike Covell about the city's 'satanic panic'.

Children being swallowed up by satanic cults, a coven leader called Scorpio and vicars urging youngsters to stay away from evil forces.

It might sound like the plot of a horror film, but in the late 1980s and 1990s, it was feared a dark force held the city in its clutches.

Historian Mike Covell said: "It was believed a satanic coven was operating in Hull. Some believed Hull

teenagers were dabbling in matters, usually involving ouija boards and tarot cards.

"Some of the theories bordered on the bizarre, with frightened parents concerned their children were satanists because they listened to rock music."

At the centre of the scandal was a hardcore cult, headed by infamous satanist Scorpio, who was accused of abducting truant-playing children and using them in rituals, held in secret locations across the city.

Panic spread wider when horses were found mutilated in fields across Hull and the East Riding and rabbits were beheaded and hung from trees outside a Hull school.

It might sound far-fetched but, such was the concern, professional people were willing to speak out. A look through the Mail's archives suggests it could have been more than just parents overreacting to dark eyeliner and Black Sabbath.

In 1988, Humberside Education Committee member Eric Wilkinson claimed black magic cults were rife

among the county's schoolchildren.

The ex-teacher said: "They were letting the power of evil into their lives. In many cases, they are terrified and I believe lives are being destroyed."

His words were echoed by Reverend Michael Vernon, a Hull vicar with first-hand experience of adults dabbling in black magic, who feared children were being lured into witchcraft.

In March 1988, he told the Mail: "They can get involved in some sorts of evil practices and the effects can be quite frightening. When dealing with evil you are dealing with a very slippery area."

In a darker layer to the already terrifying speculation, Humberside charity Childwatch founder Dianne Core believed terrified children, some as young as eight, were being lured into black magic vice rings in Hull.

A report by the charity claimed paedophiles were joining occult groups to "get their hands on children who are too terrified to talk". So powerful were the allegations, the report was even discussed in the House of Commons.

According to an article in the Mail, printed in March 1988, investigations by Childwatch revealed cases of youngsters under 12 being drugged and tied upside down on a cross before being subjected to perverted sex acts. Others were made to drink blood.

The dossier taken to Parliament included horrific details of the abuse allegedly happening in these secret covens. Three children were said to have had exorcisms performed on them by white witch Beth Gurevitch and a person "known to be introducing youngsters to occultism" was investigated by Childwatch.

By the beginning of 1990, the panic had subsided and stories of satanic worship had faded from the pages of the Mail.

Mr Covell said: "As soon as the stories appeared, they seemed to die down and within the early months of the 1990s, the stories seemed to halt."

But the relief was short-lived.

Evidence that Scorpio and his crimes were real surfaced when problematic schoolchildren, who had previously played truant, started to come forward.

"They were now claiming to have been taken to secret locations and made to take part in bizarre rituals, with one child claiming he was tied to a cross and hung upside down," said Mr Covell.

Hull was even visited by hard-nosed journalist Roger Cook, of The Cook Report, who investigated the case in his unique, take-no-prisoners style.

But by 1991, despite such widespread panic, politicians stepping forward and the case being taken to Parliament, the Mail was able to reveal there was no hard evidence to support claims such rituals had been taking place in the city.

Experts from within the police and the church were quoted, playing down the alleged "satanic panic" and the case was put down to another strange part of the city's history.

It seems hard to believe it has only been 20 years since such widespread panic gripped our city, founded mainly on rumour and outspoken figureheads. Even now, it makes for uncomfortable reading.

But it is a chapter in Hull's history that shouldn't be ignored.

9 comments

- Stranglely | October 31 2015, 10:29PM

From Hell, Hull & Halifax, may the Lord preserve us.

- curwa-hu5 | October 31 2015, 7:50PM

I can remember a high profile White Witch talking about the most evil forces the country being active in Hull about that time, things were pretty grim then.

- Mark_Hull_65 | October 31 2015, 4:59PM

@rabid badger.... Do you have a scrap of evidence that Saville was a satanist or that satanists and paedophiles 'go hand in hand'? The satanic-panic of the late eighties was pure fantasy perpetrated in the main by a sub-set of evangelical christians who for their own warped purposes wanted to portray the non-existent satanic conspiracy as part of the 'end times'. The panic led directly to the physical and psychological abuse of countless innocent children and their parents and the only thing it proved is what a powerful force for evil mainstream religions can be.

- JohnTitor | October 31 2015, 3:22PM

This whole thing was complete and utter ***** from the off! There was never any proof of ANYTHING. North Yorkshire Police, who were "investigating" were investigated for their wrongdoings not long aftward, including the fact that they sold details of people suspected of having any involment to The People news-rag, lied about "witnesses" and followed innocent people. I, myself was questioned, and had my whereabouts, daily comings and goings, (while i was living on LONDON, and visiting Hull on a regular basis) and details of people I was supposedly "associated" with, reported back to me by police. I found out, much later, that my "involvement" was alleged because I had a tattoo of a scorpion (which was actually a spider) used to wear a scorpion belt buckle, and once spoke to someone in a pub, who had a scorpion tattoo. Add to this the fact that i was approached by newspaper reporters looking for juice!. I was 18 at the time, reasonably religious and had never heard about any of this guff until this time. It made me a nervous wreck for a while.

- rabidbadger | October 31 2015, 12:36PM

Don't be too quick to dismiss this as tosh, we made that mistake when victims came forward about being abused by pedophiles. Remember that Jimmy Savile wasn't just a pedophile, he was also a practicing satanist according to several victims who were abused as part of his satanic rituals. The media hasn't covered this aspect as much, though it was reported on when the truth first came out about that vile man. To believe that there are no practicing satanists around is as naive as saying that there are no pedophiles around, in fact the two usually go hand in hand.

- CharleyBraque | October 31 2015, 11:45AM

Let's be clear 'no hard evidence' really means 'not a shred of evidence'. The whole thing was complete tosh from the start.

- Mark_Hull_65 | October 31 2015, 9:49AM

OK... Lets be clear here... The 'satanic panic' was caused in no small part by newspapers like the HDM publishing idiotic stories with no factual basis so the HDM carries a lot of the responsibility for the whole thing.

- **Strangley | October 31 2015, 8:52AM**

My mate and I, used to play Black Sabbath tracks backwards in his bedroom. If you listened carefully, you could just about hear his dad shouting "Turn that f***** racket off" up the stairs

- **Bigbob72 | October 31 2015, 8:15AM**

And Ozzy Osbourne still played Hull city hall July 3 and 17 1988! Such a bad influence. Is Black Sabbath the best they could quote?



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ONCE A YEAR IN CHINA, THE GATES OF HELL OPEN UP, LEADING TO AN INFLUX OF *spirit creatures, bad omens AND ravenous ghosts...*

Hungry are the Damned

by MOANER T. LAWRENCE



EVER WONDER WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE IF HALLOWEEN LASTED AN ENTIRE MONTH? YU LAN, OR THE HUNGRY GHOST MONTH, IS A PERIOD CELEBRATED IN SOUTHERN ASIA THAT SPANS THE ENTIRE SEVENTH MONTH OF THE CHINESE LUNISOLAR CALENDAR.

That's right, weeks of nightly supernatural suspense, rife with colourful customs and rich superstition. For an entire month, residents avoid going out after dark, swimming or leaving their chopsticks upright in a bowl of rice, for fear of an encounter with misshapen spirits known as hungry ghosts.

It all begins with family. Although there are various denominations one can belong to in Asia, filial piety (devotion to one's parents and worshipping one's ancestors) is practiced by nearly all. Devotion to loved ones is demonstrated by visiting their graves, cleaning them or displaying other courtesies, such as burning incense or praying for their souls, often long after someone has departed the mortal world. It's believed that failure to observe filial piety can have supernatural consequences, and a hungry ghost, or *preta*, is one of them. Unlike a normal soul that dies, a hungry ghost remains behind as the result of unlucky circumstances, including being overly materialistic in life, experiencing a violent death, committing suicide, neglect stemming from the fact that someone's descendants don't visit his or her grave anymore, or that a family line has perished.

Whatever the reason, the result is the same: the souls in question become stuck in what's known as the *Naraka*, the lower realm of Buddhist Hell, where they're tormented with perpetual starvation. According to Chung-wah Chow, a

Hong Kong native who leads Hungry Ghost Festival tours, "A Buddhist sutra [Sutra of Stability in Contemplation of the True] mentions that there are 36 types of hungry ghosts."

What these ghosts consume varies from something benign, such as good deeds, vomit or dung; to something parasitic like wickedness, chi (energy) or infant blood. It's also believed that becoming possessed by one can lead to illness or insanity. This wouldn't be such a problem for the living, except that the King Yama or Yan Luo, the Buddhist judge of the dead and god of Hell, opens the gates to the netherworld once a year to let the spirits roam free amongst the living to feed or take revenge on any who have wronged them.



In response to this annual influx of dark forces, a series of protective rituals are followed in an attempt to appease the hungry ghosts. At home, relatives of the recently deceased set empty places and serve entire meals for family members that have recently passed away. In town, businesses usually close up early to leave room for the ghosts to congregate, and set up food-covered altars in the street. Meanwhile, plays, operas and concerts are performed with the front rows kept empty for the ghosts to occupy. In addition, Taoist and Buddhist monks will go out into the street and publicly perform rites and offer prayers to distract or ease the spirits' pain and suffering.

Chow says one legend that explains the origins of these practices concerns the mother of one of Buddha's disciples, Maudgalyayana, who died and went to Hell for being a wicked and selfish person. As a punishment, she was reborn into a warped spiritual body: her throat became needle-thin so that she couldn't swallow any food, and her stomach bloated to an obese size making her feel ravenously hungry all the time.

"The pain she suffered in Hell was that she was always starving," he explains. "Her son tried to send her food, but whenever she put the food in her mouth, the food would burn to ash and became totally inedible."

After consulting with Buddha, the disciple discovered that the solution was to burn the food on Earth, so it would become real food in the netherworld that his mother could eat.

"This also explains why, during the festival, the food offerings to the ghosts will always be something wet, or containing a lot of water, such as fruits, congee, juices, etc.," adds Chow.

Maudgalyayana's story has resulted in the practice of burning something as a way to get goods to your deceased loved ones. The most common item is fake money called Hell Bank notes, which are always coming out in colourful new varieties and often depict King Yama.

"[Asians] see the netherworld similar to the world we are living in," says Chow. "The Hell Bank notes are for the ancestors of each family to have a better afterlife in that world. The notes are not only for them to buy any necessary commodities, but also to bribe the officials in that world. This concept is rather funny, because it reflects that the government in ancient China was just as corrupt as today's [government]!"

In addition to money, all other modern conveniences imaginable are available in paper form for shipment to the afterlife, including shaving sets, jewelry, HD TVs, iPhones and lingerie.

However, Yu Lan isn't all fun and games; there are several taboos that are solemnly respected during the festival out of deeper fears. It's considered extremely bad luck, for example, to eat any of the food or sit in the seats reserved for the ghosts. Also, speaking or coming in contact with the Chinese character for the number four is a bad omen because it looks and sounds a lot like the Chinese word for death. (Tourists can get a room with a number 4 on it cheaper during this time because of the bad vibe it supposedly inspires.)

Staying out of dark corners, woods and alleys at

night is considered mandatory, as such shadowy places attract hungry ghosts. Matrimony during this month is also considered a bad omen, as is leaving your chopsticks upright in a bowl of rice; it resembles a funeral urn with incense sticking out, which might attract a ghost and bring chaos and misfortune to the restaurant it's lured to. People also avoid investment and making financial decisions during this time, to the extent that the Asian stock exchanges dip.

Finally, one of the biggest taboos during Yu Lan involves avoiding bodies of water. Chow tells us this is based on one of the most feared spirits: the *shui gui*.

"[Shui gui] refers to people killed by water," he says. "Either they committed suicide by jumping into the sea, a lake, or they died in a water-related accident. According to Chinese folklore, shui gui are trapped in the water until they find their prey [i.e. another living human] and they will drown this person, possess his body and get reincarnated as a new human being and finally leave the water world."

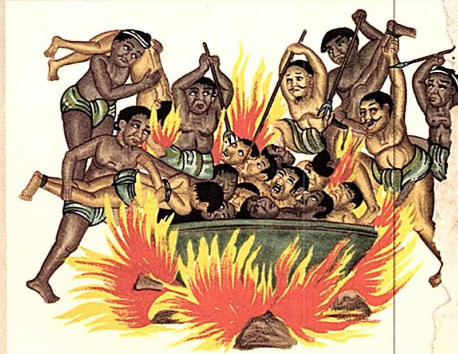
The soul of the drowned person then becomes the new *shui gui* who will have to search for another victim so that they can be reincarnated as well. Therefore, swimming, and travelling by, or over, water during Yu Lan is also avoided. In some areas, people won't even go fishing or launch new boats for fear of these ghosts.

The aforementioned taboos and rituals all culminate in a grand celebration that falls on the 14th night (or 15th depending on where you live) called the Hungry Ghost Festival. The largest of these fests are celebrated in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore, and are marked by a ritual called the Burning of the King of Ghosts. "Burning the King of Ghosts is a ritual performed on the last day of the festival," says Chow. "The King of Ghosts is actually a paper effigy. It is a form of incarnation of the *Bodhisattva*

[an unenlightened Buddha], and burning the King of Ghosts is to signify to the hungry ghosts that they should now be satisfied and must return to the netherworld before the gates of Hell are closed."

After the King of Ghosts is immolated, people spend the remaining two weeks of Yu Lan floating paper boats and red lanterns to guide the ghosts back to the underworld, where they'll wait until next year.

Though Yu Lan remains relatively obscure to Westerners, many of us have already experienced some aspect of it. Japanese author Koji Suzuki, often regarded as the Stephen King of the East, is a solid example: in addition to writing fiction that spawned the J-horror phenomenon, he's also helped migrate many of the supernatural entities we see in Yu Lan, such as vengeance ghosts (*The Grudge*) and shui gui (*The Ring*, *Dark Water*). In addition, filmmaker Eduardo Sánchez made the festival the topic of his 2008 film *Seventh Moon*, about tourists running afoul of the ghosts while visiting a remote village during Yu Lan. With *Dia De Los Muertos*, *Krampusnacht* and *Walpurgisnacht* becoming more prominent internationally, expect China's hungry ghosts to have their turn at the table. 🍻



Burnt Offerings: Food is left out for the ravenous spirits during Yu Lan, (above) a depiction of the lower realm of Buddhist hell, called Naraka, and (opposite) fake money, which is burned for the hungry ghosts.

Townpeople gather to hunt werewolf in Hull known as 'Old Stinker'

metro.co.uk

Jen Mills for Metro.co.uk Sunday 15 May 2016 9:31 pm



The beast is believed to lurk in the Barmston drain (Picture: Alamy)

Next full moon, the hunt is on.

Half man, half dog, a huge, 8ft tall animal has been seen by several people out in the woods around Hull – and they want to track down once and for all what it is and where it comes from.

Townpeople gather to hunt werewolf in Hull known as 'Old Stinker' Over the past few months, several witnesses have come forward to report seeing the sinister werewolf near the Barmston Drain near the town of Beverley.

Could it be the creature Yorkshire folk stories tell of... The hairy beast with red eyes and foul breath known as 'Old Stinker'?

One woman claims to have seen it mid transformation from human to beast, reports The Daily Express.



Half man, half wolf: It was allegedly seen eating an Alsation dog (Picture: Alamy)

'It was stood upright one moment. The next it was down on all fours running like a dog. I was terrified,' she said.

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B8114N Directed by Len Wiseman Credit: Alamy

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Headdress reconstruction throws light on hunter-gatherer rituals

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Depiction of an Evenki shaman wearing antler headdress (after Witsen 1785, 655).

A research team led by archaeologists at the University of York used traditional techniques to create replicas of ritual headdresses made by hunter-gatherers 11,000 years ago in North Western Europe.

A research team led by archaeologists at the University of York used traditional techniques to create replicas of ritual headdresses made by hunter-gatherers 11,000 years ago in North Western Europe.

Flint blades, hammerstones and burning were among the tools and techniques they employed to fashion reproductions of shamanic

headdresses discovered during excavations at the Early Mesolithic site at Star Carr in North Yorkshire.

The research published today in *PLOS ONE* is the first scientific analysis of the oldest known evidence of a shamanic costume in Europe. It challenges previously held assumptions over the care and time invested in the modification of the animal's "skull cap" in order to create these ritualistic artefacts.

Instead the study, part of a five-year project supported by the European Research Council, Historic England and the Vale of Pickering Research Trust, suggests that hunter-gatherers achieved this through expedient manufacturing techniques. These may have involved packing the skull with damp clay and placing it in a bed of embers for up to four hours both to facilitate skin removal and make the bone easier to work.

Archaeologists unearthed a total 24 red deer headdresses at Star Carr representing around 90 percent of all such known artefacts across early prehistoric Europe. The artefacts are formed from the upper part of a male red deer skull with the antlers attached – the lower jaw and cranial bones having been removed and the frontal bone perforated.

The majority of the headdresses were discovered during archaeological investigations at Star Carr in the 1940s though researchers unearthed a further three during excavations in 2013. The most complete of these is likely to have come from a male adult red deer though the animal was 50 per cent larger than its modern counterparts.



Placing clay-covered crania onto fire pit. (b) repacking damp clay onto burnt crania, containing cooked brain, for further firing.

Using techniques including 3D laser scanning allowed the team to observe and analyse a number of cut marks radiating out of perforations on both sides of the crania.

The researchers, which also involved researchers from the universities of Bradford, Chester, Manchester, Groningen and Leiden, concluded that hunter-gatherers were likely to have

removed the head and superficially cleaned it before starting work on producing the headdress.

The first stage of the process may have involved removal of a large amount of antler possibly to reduce the weight of the headdress and make it easier to work. Some of the removed antler may have formed 'blanks' for the production of barbed projectile tips used for hunting and fishing.

But it is also possible that, in some cases, antler blank removal happened much later after the headdress had been used; in which case the process may have been a form of decommissioning of the headdress and/or the recycling of antler. The researchers say that given the amount of worked antler present at Star Carr, including over 200 barbed projectile tips, this is a plausible theory.

Lead author Dr Aimée Little, of the BioArCh research centre in the Department of Archaeology at York, said: "This research shows how experimental archaeology can give important insights into rare ancient artefacts. Knowing fire was used invokes a real sense of atmosphere surrounding the making of these ritual shamanic headdresses."

Professor Nicky Milner, co-director of the excavations at Star Carr, added: "These headdresses are incredibly rare finds in the archaeological record. This is the only site in Britain where they are found, and there are only a few other headdresses known from Germany. This work into how they might have been made has given us an important glimpse into what life was like 11,000 years ago."

Dr Andrew Wilson, Senior Lecturer and co-director of Bradford Visualisation in the School of Archaeological Sciences at the University of Bradford, said: "This exciting collaboration enabled the team to use a range of complementary 3D capture methods to document and investigate the modification of the deer crania at a variety of scales, before these waterlogged organic artefacts were subject to conservation treatment. This is a great showcase for how 3D documentation and analysis can transform our ability to understand objects of past societies."

UNIVERSITY OF YORK

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OUTLOOK

Mass hysteria

coordinated by Linda Neo

THE Woodville Secondary School in Aljunied Road is just like any secondary school in Singapore. Except for the week in April last year when 60 of its students went hysterical.

For three days, a frightening "epidemic" swept one student after another into frenzied trances.

While some cried, screamed, shivered and started eating the grass and empty glass, others started into empty space with open eyes while performing a Tai Chi type of dance movement called the Kua Kua Kua, an ancient Malay wedding dance.

Some were restrained from their violent fits by the teachers. No one could communicate with them during their violent fits and trances.

Twenty-eight students gave 28 different descriptions of legends appearing before them. Although the police and spokesmen of the school confirmed the outbreak of mass hysteria, nobody wanted to talk about it while the atmosphere of fear prevailed in the school.

What happened in Woodville school is, in fact, an age-old human affliction that has appeared in various forms over the centuries — from the dancing mania of the Middle Ages to the fainting and mewing nuns in Europe.

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Why did the students of a local secondary school break out in mass hysteria? Nobody knows, or has a scientific explanation. These outbreaks are not peculiar to any particular country, culture or creed, nor are they a symptom of the evils of a fast, modern pace — there have been such outbreaks since the Middle Ages; and yet, there is very little research being done on the whys and wherefores of mass hysteria. BENG TAN investigates.

"seizure" and "fright-ened" cases. During an outbreak, those who have seizures would go into a violent struggle, swinging their limbs and kicking about, and as many as four people are needed to restrain each of them.

There was a lot of screaming and kicking, and large doses of injections of tranquillisers were given.

Some of the telephonists said a "jin" had entered their bodies. This is yet another case of mass hysteria which was not reported to the industrial health division, and went unrecorded.

Because mass hysteria is disruptive in an industrial setting and results in work stoppages, there is some urgency in highly industrialised Singapore to deal with this phenomenon.

In April the division conducted a seminar where representatives from some 50 factories turned up to study the guidelines drawn by the division for handling outbreaks of mass hysteria.

Dr Phoon said "We believe factories should be helped in handling these outbreaks as they interfere with work routine and can be traumatic to those who are affected."

Dr Phoon said after investigations and close study of individual cases of mass hysteria occurring in factories here, the division has made some observations and findings, and guidelines to contain an outbreak of mass hysteria are being drawn.

The studies show that the largest age group affected are those below 25. A significant number of those affected have histories of psychosomatic complaints and those employed for less than three years in the same factory are more susceptible to hysteria.

Psychological tests taken by the unaffected and affected factory population show no definite personality characteristic difference in terms of intelligence, culture, educational background, position in the family and marital status.

According to the guidelines drawn by the division, the most important step to be taken in any mass hysteria situation is to "immunise" the rest of the unaffected factory workforce.

It was only last June that for the first time a world conference was organised in Chicago to discuss this peculiar problem.

It is only in the early 70s that Malaysia started observing such outbreaks, especially in their schools; and it is only recently that the United States has started studies on outbreaks in their factory workforce.

So much is still unknown about this subject that social scientists are starting to pool their knowledge in exchange information about their researches and findings.

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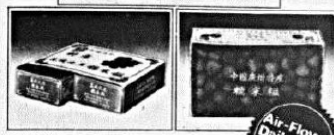
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Let's See What the IDF Collected During Amnesty Month [photo]



Just some of the equipment and weapons returned during IDF amnesty month 2016 Photo Credit: IDF

Back in March, the IDF declared amnesty month from March 20 until April 15. You could return all your IDF equipment you “accidentally” took home – no questions asked, no jail time.

The operation quickly received some guns and ammo, but now that it's over, let's take a look at some of the more interesting things that was returned.

According to the chart below, the IDF received back:



457 guns and rifles of all types

1,343,711 rounds of ammunition

1890 grenades

396 explosive ignition and pyrotechnic systems

220 binoculars, scopes and night vision equipment

equipment (helmets, vests, knives, clothing...)

2142 explosives, shells, mortars and missiles

What appears to be 2 joysticks from a plane,

And **one** seriously decked-out motorcycle!

(The motorcycle appears to have been included in the photos as a joke.)



IDF Weapons 3

(This last photo with the motorcycle appears to have been included as a joke on someone's part!)

H/T: Thanks to HotNews1 for forwarding all the photos

Photo of the Day

About the Author: Every day we try to bring you an interesting photo of the day related to Israel or the Jewish People. If you have a photo you'd like to submit, send it to us with [this submission form](#).

Our comments section is intended for meaningful responses and debates in a civilized manner. We ask that you respect the fact that we are a religious Jewish website and avoid inappropriate language at all cost.



IDF Weapons 1



7 Responses to "Let's See What the IDF Collected During Amnesty Month [photo]"

1. Keith Gilbert says:
May 18, 2016 at 2:01 PM

Surrounded and infiltrated with an enemy, islam, that demands your immediate death and destruction and dreck brained children turn in weapons...the motorcycle is pretty cool though, never saw one of those before. "They Must Go!"



IDF Weapons 4

2. Uzi Kattan says:
May 18, 2016 at 4:35 PM

I also saw an article about a Jeep which was returned 15 years later.;

3. Gregory Howard says:
May 18, 2016 at 5:18 PM

I thinkk you are lying about the motorscooter:



IDF Weapons 7



IDF Weapons 6

<http://bassman5911.tumblr.com/post/73028334608/entdeckt-im-fackbook-bei-show-us-your-scoots>

4. Scott McLellan says:
May 18, 2016 at 5:22 PM

What kind of motorcycle is that? must have,

5. Jon White says:

May 18, 2016 at 5:53 PM

The "joysticks" look like control sticks from F-15s. (http://www.f-15e.info/technology/cockpit/forward_stick/pics/talon.jpg)

6. Shrink Davesays:

May 19, 2016 at 3:00 AM

That's what was returned. Imagine what's still out there!

7. Shrink Dave says:

May 19, 2016 at 3:01 AM

Wonder who has the rest of the F-15?

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WHO

?

KNEW

13 Odd Things That Happened on Friday The 13th

BY ANDY SIMMONS



STATISTICALLY, what happens on this superstitious day is no more bizarre than what goes on during any other day of the year. Well, we'll find out if the statisticians are correct this month because 2016 is the rare year that has only one Friday the 13th on the calendar, and it falls in May. Friggatriskaidekaphobes (Friday the 13th scaredy-cats) are preparing for the worst. After all, the following all occurred on this blackest of days.

- 1 On Friday, October 13, 1307, the French rounded up thousands of Knights Templars and tortured them as heretics. Some wonder whether this was the beginning of the whole Friday the 13th mythology (if it is a myth ...).
- 2 On Friday, November 13, 1829, 10,000 people gathered to watch Sam Patch jump into New York's Genesee River from atop the

Genesee Falls. Only weeks earlier, he'd leaped off Niagara Falls and into the Niagara River and survived. He wasn't as lucky this time.

3 On Friday, October 13, 1972, a plane crashed in the Andes. Twelve people died instantly, and survivors resorted to cannibalism.

4 That very same day, 174 were killed when a Russian airliner crashed on landing near Moscow.

5 On Friday, August 13, 2010, a 13-year-old boy in Suffolk, England, was struck by lightning. The lightning reportedly hit at 1:13, or 13:13 in military time. The boy survived unharmed.

6 On Friday, October 13, 2006, nearly half a million people lost power when Buffalo, New York, and the surrounding suburbs were buried under 22 to 24 inches of snow. Western New York is used to a lot of snow, but 24 inches? In October?!

7 On Friday, October 13, 1989, the stock market fell a whopping 6.91 percent. At the time, it was the second-worst day in market history.

8 On Friday, July 13, 1979, Bob Renphrey decided to stay in bed every subsequent Friday the 13th because of a spate of bad luck he'd suffered on that unlucky day, such

as: walking through a plate glass door, getting fired, and putting his wife in the hospital after hitting her in the head with a stick meant for the dog. Another Friday the 13th saw his wife fall down a flight of stairs.

9 On Friday, July 13, 1951, after days of record-setting rain fell in northeastern Kansas, swollen rivers poured over their banks—consuming the cities of Topeka, Lawrence, and Manhattan in the process.

10 On Friday, July 13, 1821, one of the scariest fellows ever was born: Nathan Bedford Forrest, a founder of the Ku Klux Klan.

11 On Friday, January 13, 2012, the cruise ship *Costa Concordia* partially sank off the Italian coast after running aground, killing 32.

12 On Friday, April 13, 2029, Asteroid 99942 Apophis is forecast to pass Earth a scant 18,000 miles away, closer than any of the satellites we've put into orbit.

13 On every Friday the 13th, the world's economy apparently loses about \$900 million because people are scared to work and travel on this date, says Donald Dassey, founder of the Stress Management Center and Phobia Institute. **R**

Sources: livescience.com, huffingtonpost.com, listverse.com, bustle.com, dailymirror.com

holding a place of power is still simply human. People may be grieving, they may be in need, they may be sitting with an ache that only we can

help ease. They may be nothing like the picture that society paints of them, and they may want to do something extraordinary. **R**

THE POEM FOR WENDY

Everything's a Gift

*Here we pay tribute to the teachers of wisdom.
All who choose to re-create the standard way of leaving,
Who carelessly furl away grief in the name of celebrating
The greater weave, who allow experience to shine as it should,
The beauty of all things held high and seen well,
Even in the darkest of times.*

*It is these guides who recognize the fickle ways of the body,
Knowing that all life is not had in the mind, who discover
The sturdy ground is in the kith and kin, in the loves
We nurture with the simple give and take that can only be had
Through such constant connection.*

*It is these who settle on patience in the face of mystery
and misfortune, knowing that we are but provided with words
as explanations and everything's a gift. And so beyond
trying to figure answers and find ends, we should instead
honor the circle we've been offered, allow for its turns
and delivery to come with grace and acceptance so that we
might leave it all behind knowing how perfect it was
in all directions.*

—For Wendy, Neal, Zach, and Annie, and all who continue to be touched by Wendy's love and wisdom. Written July 25, 2010, by Jacqueline Suskin, with honor and thanks.

YES! MAGAZINE (SUMMER 2015). COPYRIGHT © 2015 BY JACQUELINE SUSKIN. YESMAGAZINE.ORG

That's Outrageous!

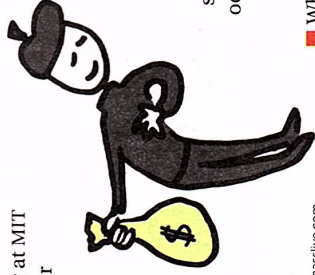
GUESS WHO IS TELLING THE TRUTH

■ A former art lecturer at MIT

was sentenced to a year in jail for robbing a bank. Although he admitted to committing the crime, he insisted he should not serve time.

HIS EXCUSE: It was done as part of a performance art piece.

Source: masslive.com



officer to be quick, as he was in a hurry.

HIS EXCUSE: He had tickets for the Super Bowl in Santa Clara, California, and kickoff was at 6:30. Police were skeptical, since the stop occurred in Pennsylvania.

Source: pennlive.com

■ When a Florida bicyclist was detained, police found crack cocaine in his pants pocket. "Wait, what?" said the man.

HIS EXCUSE: He had no idea how the crack had gotten into the pants because they weren't his pants. The cash the cops found? Yeah, that was his, but not the drugs.

Source: Sun-Sentinel (Miami)

■ A Pennsylvania man was convicted of pulling off ten armed robberies. Although the heists were caught on videos that showed his face, he denied responsibility.

HIS EXCUSE: Of course the guy in the videos looked like him. It was his "evil twin."

Source: Las Vegas Sun

SO WHO'S TELLING THE TRUTH? Let's raise a glass to auto-brewery syndrome lady!

■ After a Breathalyzer test showed

her blood alcohol level was more than four times the legal limit, a New York State woman was arrested. But, she said, there was an explanation.

HER EXCUSE: She suffered from auto-brewery syndrome, which meant her body created alcohol.

Source: CNN

■ Another disputed DUI occurred in Wisconsin. The 75-year-old driver told officers he hadn't touched a drop. **HIS EXCUSE:** His blood alcohol level was high because of his dinner—beer-battered fish.

Source: WISC-TV

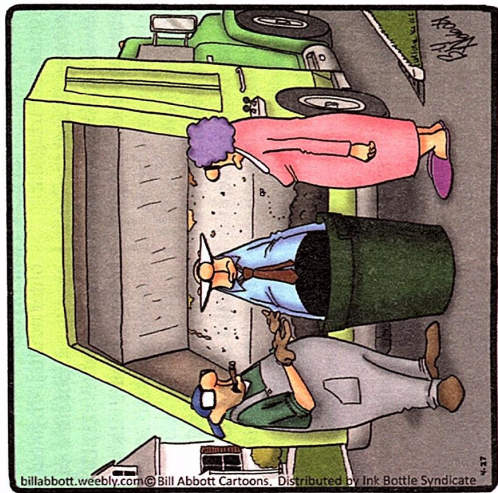
■ On February 7, at 4:30 p.m., a driver was pulled over for topping 100 mph. The man, however, asked the police

ILLUSTRATION BY NICK DAUPHIN



ALL IN

A Day's Work



"Look, lady, I told you before: anything over 100 pounds you gotta take to the dump yourself."

CLIENT: Please remove the unnecessary circle at the end of the sentence.

Me: You mean ... the period?

Client: I don't care what you designers call it; it is unsightly. Delete it.

Source: clientsfromhell.net

THE CLOSEST A PERSON ever comes to perfection is when he fills out a job application form.

Businessman **STANLEY RANDALL**

58 | 05-2016 | rd.com

ILLUSTRATION BY BILL ABBOTT

IT'S AMAZING HOW a person can compliment and insult you at the same time. Recently, when I greeted my coworker, she said, "You look so gorgeous, I didn't recognize you."

ELAINE SCHYVE, Cohocton, New York

WHILE I WAS OUT TO LUNCH, my coworker answered my phone and told the caller that I would be back in 20 minutes. The woman asked, "Is that 20 minutes Central Standard Time?"

JAMIE HINDMAN, Lewisville, Texas

A SALESMAN talked my uncle into buying 10,000 personalized pens for his business with the promise that he would be eligible to win a 32-foot yacht. A born gambler, my uncle agreed.

Well, he won, and a few weeks after the pens arrived, his prize showed up: a 12-inch plastic yacht with 32 plastic feet glued to the bottom.

EDDIE EDWARDS, Ripley, Tennessee

OVERHEARD AT OUR DINER:

Girl: Ick! Why does this sandwich have bacon on it?

Friend: You ordered a BLT.

Girl: Whaaaaa? I thought the B stood for bread.

ALYSSA HOOVER, Dillsburg, Pennsylvania

AS A SPEECH THERAPIST, I was working with a preschooler on body-part identification and the k sound. To that end, I had him use Play-Doh to make a sculpture of me.

"Is that my neck?" I asked, trying to get him to repeat the word.

"No, that's your chin," he said.

He added more Play-Doh. "Is that my neck?" I asked.

"No, that's your other chin."

ILENE SMITH, Milan, Michigan

Anything funny happen to you at work lately? It could be worth \$100. For details, see page 7 or go to rd.com/submit.

WHAT WORK E-MAILS REALLY MEAN

I have a question. = I have 18 questions.

I'll look into it. = I've already forgotten about it.

I tried my best. = I did the bare minimum.

Happy to discuss further. = Don't ask me about this again.

No worries. = You really messed up this time.

Take care. = This is the last you'll ever hear from me.

Cheers! = I have no respect for you or myself!

Source: theccooperreview.com

rd.com | 05-2016 | 59

1 THE SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE ON FORGIVENESS CAME TO THE FORE ONLY IN 1989. But some researchers suggest we're seeing more public figures seeking forgiveness because we're becoming more aware of the importance of achieving reconciliation.

2 CATS NEVER FORGIVE. Primates, like bonobos, mountain gorillas, and chimps, often follow confrontations with friendly behavior like embracing or kissing. Similar behavior has been observed in nonprimates like goats and hyenas; the only species that has so far failed to show outward signs of reconciliation is the domestic cat.

3 NO OFFENSE IS UNFORGIVABLE. "I have never found a particular injustice in the world that I don't know of at least one person who has forgiven those who have perpetrated it," says Robert Enright, a psychologist who pioneered the study of forgiveness.

4 BUT BEWARE OF BETRAYAL. According to a study from 2010, the most common type of unforgiven offense is betrayal, including affairs, deceit, broken promises, and divulged secrets.

5

THERE ARE DIFFERENT KINDS OF FORGIVENESS. Decisional forgiveness is a sincere decision to change the way you intend to behave toward someone who has wronged you, even though you may still feel negatively toward the person. Emotional forgiveness is a change in the way you feel toward this person—resentment giving way to positive emotions like empathy, sympathy, compassion, and even love.

6 Repeatedly asking forgiveness will eventually extract it from others.

6 YOUNG KIDS FORGIVE EASILY. Unlike ten- and 11-year-olds, seven- and eight-year-olds in one study didn't need an apology to forgive; they tended to judge offenders who had apologized and those who hadn't as equally worthy.

7 CARRYING A GRUDGE LITERALLY WEIGHS YOU DOWN. Researchers at Erasmus University in the Netherlands asked people to write about a time when they either gave or withheld forgiveness. The human guinea pigs were then asked to jump as high as they could, five times, without bending their knees. The forgivers jumped highest, about 11.8 inches on average, while the grudge holders jumped 8.5 inches—a huge difference and a startling illustration of how forgiveness can actually unburden you.

8

EXTROVERTS NEED FORGIVENESS. Outgoing types are more proactive in seeking out forgiveness than introverts are (and also, notably, quicker to forgive others). Introverts tend to be initially more concerned with forgiving themselves than making amends with a person they've offended.

9

FOR A HEALTHIER HEART, BE MORE FORGIVING. When people are reminded of grudges, their heart rate and blood pressure can increase. Forgiveness, on the other hand, has been linked to better heart health. Plus, you'll sleep better when you let bygones be just that. But keep in mind you can't fake it: Researchers believe that the health benefits associated directly with forgiving apply only to emotional, not decisional, forgiveness (see No. 5).

10

FORGIVENESS CAN BACKFIRE. Couples who described themselves as more forgiving also reported experiencing more psychological and physical aggression over the first four years of marriage. In some cases, it's believed, forgiveness may keep the offending people from changing their bad behavior.

11

DON'T UNDERESTIMATE THE WORDS I'M SORRY. Behavioral economist Dan Ariely has found that repeatedly asking forgiveness will eventually extract it from others—

even if you don't really mean it and even if the person you've wronged knows you don't really mean it.

12 RELIGIOUS PEOPLE ARE MORE FORGIVING THAN THE NONRELIGIOUS. This is perhaps not surprising: most religions teach forgiveness, says Everett Worthington, a psychologist at Virginia Commonwealth University. But, interestingly, a 2013 study he coauthored found that people who consider themselves spiritual are more likely to practice self-forgiveness than people who called themselves religious.

13 THE AMISH ARE VERY FORGIVING. A decade ago, after a shooting at an Amish schoolhouse claimed five young lives, outsiders were stunned when the community responded with immediate forgiveness. But sociologist Donald B. Kraybill found that from an early age, the Amish practice forgiveness exercises. They'd been preparing to forgive this huge injustice their whole lives.

14 A FIVE-STEP PROCESS TO FORGIVENESS. 1. Admit you've been treated unjustly. 2. Respond with anger. 3. Work on seeing the person who harmed you as not solely defined by this offense. 4. Come to understand that the pain may not ever dissipate completely. 5. Find meaning in your suffering, perhaps by helping others.

<https://decolonialatlas.wordpress.com/2016/04/12/inuit-cartography/>

The Decolonial Atlas

Re-imagining the world.

April 12, 2016 April 14, 2016 / decolonialatlas



InuitCartography.jpg

In Kalaallit Nunaat (Greenland), the Inuit people are known for carving portable maps out of driftwood to be used while navigating coastal waters. These pieces, which are small enough to be carried in a mitten, represent coastlines in a continuous line, up one side of the wood and down the other. The maps are compact, buoyant, and can be read in the dark.

These three wooden maps show the journey from Sermiligaaq to Kangertittivatsiaq, on Greenland's East Coast. The map to the right shows the islands along the coast, while the

map in the middle shows the mainland and is read from one side of the block around to the other. The map to the left shows the peninsula between the Sermiligaaq and Kangertivartikajik fjords.

Source: Topografisk Atlas Grønland

12 thoughts on "Inuit Cartography"



1. Nunavummiut
April 14, 2016 at 7:55 pm

Very interesting! As practical and portable as any paper map.

2. Pingback: Maps of the North | Arinn Dembo

3. Pingback: Decolonial Atlas (especially: Inuit Cartography) | Sculpture



4. poetrywithoutborders2016
April 14, 2016 at 1:23 pm

Super interesting! Congrats!

5. Pingback: Fun with Maps: Inuit Cartography | Chandler Gibbons



6. Ben McKee

April 14, 2016 at 4:15 am

Reminds me of the wave refraction maps made by the South Pacific Islanders.



7. Forrest Aguirre

April 14, 2016 at 12:56 am

Incredibly cool!



8. merrell

April 13, 2016 at 11:27 pm

wow. this is really interesting but not surprising. what a smart way to navigate



9. carolscreativeworkshops.net

April 13, 2016 at 7:33 pm

Glad to discover this



10. Dan

April 13, 2016 at 12:26 pm

Wow, amazing

11. donesoverdone

April 13, 2016 at 3:28 am

Reblogged this on things I've read or intend to

12. Living Toronto

April 12, 2016 at 7:53 pm

Brilliant!

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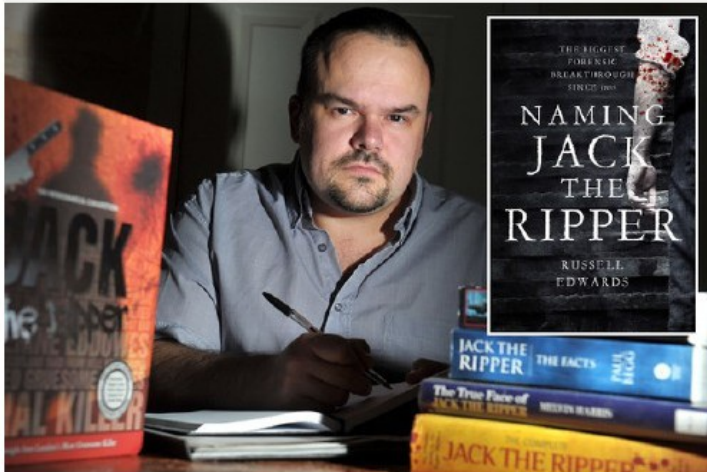
Is Jack The Ripper Aaron Kosminski? Er, no, says expert Mike Covell

May 19th 2016

hulldailymail.co.uk

By Hull Daily Mail | Posted: September 09, 2014

By Paul Johnson



RIPPER EXPERT: Hull historian Mike Covell and (inset) the controversial new book.



Claims Jack The Ripper was a 23-year-old Polish barber called Aaron

Kosminski do not stand up to scrutiny, a Hull historian and Ripper expert says.

The notorious Whitechapel murders of 1888 have never been solved, but now a new book, to be published tomorrow (Tuesday), argues DNA evidence proves "beyond doubt" that the Ripper was a Polish immigrant who died in an asylum.

Naming Jack the Ripper, by Russell Edwards, claims an analysis of blood samples on a shawl supposedly found at the scene of one of the murders, prove Kosminski "definitely, categorically and absolutely" was the Ripper.

Mr Edwards, an "armchair detective", bought the blood-stained shawl at auction in 2007. A police officer claimed to have taken it from the scene of the murder of Catherine Eddowes and it was then handed down through his family for generations.

The author linked up with Jari Louhelainen, an expert in molecular biology, to extract the DNA. His claims were widely reported in last Sunday's newspapers.

"I've got the only piece of forensic evidence in the whole history of the case," said Mr Edwards. "We have definitively solved the mystery of who Jack the Ripper was.

"Only non-believers that want to perpetuate the myth will doubt. This is it now – we have unmasked him."

But Hull historian Mike Covell, who has published a number of books about the Ripper murders, said Mr Edwards' conclusions were unlikely to be correct.

The history of the blood-stained shawl is hazy to say the least and, although Kosminski was named by police as a possible suspect, experts on the case have long ruled him out as a serious contender to be the Ripper.

In fact, it seems he was considered a harmless mentally ill man who was locked up because he had a fondness for masturbation.

"There is no provenance to the shawl," said Mr Covell. "A police officer named Amos Simpson claims to have not only been at the murder scene but to have taken the shawl home. This is false. He was never at the scene.

"The inquest reports and official files show everything Eddowes had on her and with her the night she was murdered. There is no mention of the shawl."

Adding to the doubts is the fact that the shawl has been handled by many people over the years, including the descendants of Catherine Eddowes, increasing the risk of contamination.

Claims the DNA conclusively proves Kosminski's guilt are also wide of the mark, Mr Covell says.

"Mitochondrial DNA can be taken from every female family member and even from a ethnic group and not singled down to one sole person," he said. "The family of Kosminski made clothes in Whitechapel, they were registered as furriers.

"I worked with a television crew on the shawl in 2010. We tested several stains and whilst they were discovered to be blood and semen we could not get any matches or DNA sequences because the samples were too old and too degraded.

"As for Kosminski, we have historical evidence that at the time of the murders he was fine and it was not until 1891 that he displayed any illness.

"He was not recorded as being a threat to anyone, nor made any threats, but was locked up because he had a fondness for masturbation."

Despite a host of suspects, Britain's most famous serial killer, who is believed to have murdered at least five prostitutes in London in 1888, has never been satisfactorily identified.

This week's revelations are not the first time a researcher has attempted to unmask the Ripper using DNA. In her book *Portrait of a Killer*, crime writer Patricia Cornwell identified artist Walter Sickert as the murderer, based on DNA she claimed to have found on letters said to be written by the Ripper. Unfortunately, almost all experts consider the letters to be hoaxes.

Mr Covell has researched links between Hull and the Whitechapel murders.

Among the suspects is Frederick Bailey Deeming, who was locked up in Hull Prison in 1890 for defrauding a jewellery store in Whitefriargate.

He went on to kill his wife and four children in Rainhill before fleeing to Australia, where he

was hanged for killing another woman. Circumstantial evidence links him to the Ripper crimes.

Mr Covell said: "Deeming's modus operandi in the murders of his wives and children is very similar to that of the Whitechapel victims.

"It is also interesting to note that Deeming was accused by a dress maker during his 1892 trial of being in London during the Ripper murders.

"His own solicitor also stated that he thought Deeming was the Ripper, but later retracted his story."

8 comments

- BigJohn | September 11 2014, 11:42AM

This process repeats regularly - someone publishes a new book claiming that they have, at last, discovered the irrefutable, undeniable identity of The Ripper. This claim is immediately dismissed by the Ripperology community. We then wait for the next definitive revelation and so it goes on. I doubt we will ever know but is interesting to watch the obsessive speculations unfolding as the years pass.

- Clem_ | September 09 2014, 9:47PM

It's quite sad when some long standing mystery is solved. Mysteries are fascinating, often exciting and the subject of much debate. Solving them, particularly the very old ones, takes away a little of life's romance. I like to be intrigued and don't want to know who Jack The Ripper was. However, I would like to know who the prat was who nicked my lovely bike ten years ago.

- mrTcharger | September 09 2014, 7:47PM

AHHH I'm going to bust everyone's bubble.... Well back in this time period there wasn't quick laundry matts nor washer and dryers in everyone's house or apartment..Plus being Jack the ripper went after prostitutes or the unfortunates as they called them ... I highly doubt people changed all their clothing daily ,showered daily or washed there clothes weekly... So what if this woman had sex with this man Aaron Kosminski a day or even a few hours before Jack the ripper killed her ? Well this seems like a technique for someone to sell books and get Rich !!!!!!!!!!!!! I don't buy it Further more They claimed that jack the ripper had some skills and intelligent this man Aarron apparently was a Schizophrenic

- GeneMan | September 09 2014, 6:06PM

"I worked with a television crew on the shawl in 2010. We tested several stains and whilst they were discovered to be blood and semen we could not get any matches or DNA sequences because the samples were too old and too degraded." Really? Where is your scientific paper and data? Sorry mate, it is not even the same shawl. Sour

grapes? Book worm trying to ride the wave? LOL

- gangmanstyle | September 09 2014, 10:46AM

so why hasn't he been arrested yet? lol

- 23041642 | September 09 2014, 10:10AM

You haven't convinced me Mr Covell. The DNA- despite the shortcomings you mention, offer better clarity than your weak denials. Wake up to the fact that at least most of the mystery has now been solved and an almost certain suspect is in the frame. It's rather sad that technology has caught up and spoiled the fun in all this but there you are.

- tosh1958 | September 09 2014, 12:23AM

At the end of the day they all think they know who he was but lets face it we will never know and is it of any real importance, the killer and those alive at that time are all dead and buried.

- Saucerbug | September 08 2014, 9:54PM

Oh dear. I wondered how Mr Covell would take the news. I'm inclined to agree with him (and with an article in the Independent) that Edwards and his scientific partner haven't come up with the irrefutable evidence which they claim. But neither has Mr Covell. Too many people have a vested interest in the Ripper's identity.



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Jelly Belly Family Sued Over WWII Tank Death

201605170500

thedailybeast.com

NOT SO SWEET

05.16.16 10:00 PM ET

Jelly Belly Family Sued Over WWII Tank Death

The husband of the candy maker's CEO accidentally killed a man with a WWII tank at the company chairman's 'Tank Barn.'

The family reunion for the owners of the Jelly Belly Candy Company quickly turned tragic with one of the world's most recent deaths by a World War II-era tank.

Candy is the day job of Herman Rowland Sr., chair of the board at the Jelly Belly Candy Company. But the jelly-bean mogul has made a passion project of restoring old military vehicles at the American Armory Museum, aka the "Tank Barn," his personal showroom in Fairfield, California.

It was at the Tank Barn that Dwayne Brasher—husband to Rowland's daughter, Jelly Belly CEO Lisa Brasher—ran over a man named Kevin Wright with a tank last August, orphaning his two daughters, Wright's family says in a new lawsuit. The suit, filed on May 11 in a California Superior Court, accuses Rowland and Brasher of negligence resulting in wrongful death, one that deprived the Wrights of a family provider.

Brasher, Rowland, and Jelly Belly did not answer requests for comment by press time.

Tanks are difficult to drive—especially without experience. And operating a World War II-era 1944 M5 tank is presumably even more difficult.

"Defendants had a duty to train and supervise the persons operating the M5 tank and to lend their World War II vehicles only to individuals with sufficient knowledge to drive them so as to ensure they would be operated safely," the lawsuit claims.

But Brasher, Rowland's son-in-law, had no tank training, the suit alleges. To compensate for his lack of experience, Brasher allegedly asked Wright—a contractor employed to help maintain and move the Tank Barn's vehicles—to hop aboard the antique war rig.

"Said defendants had a further duty to ensure that the vehicles had proper safety features such as seat belts and hand rails which could be used by passengers to ensure their safety during use," the suit reads.

Rowland was in the process of modifying one of his antique tanks to fire Jelly Belly candies, according to Fairfield, California's Daily Republic newspaper. He had already reconfigured a cannon to shoot bags of jelly beans, as The Wall Street Journal reported in 2014.

But despite his penchant for sweet upgrades, the Jelly Belly chair had allegedly neglected to add safety features to his tanks. "Yeah, there are no seat belts," Peter Alfert, a lawyer representing Wright's father and two daughters, told The Daily Beast.

On that fateful day, Wright took a seat facing backwards next to Brasher—a position that allegedly prevented him from seeing upcoming bumps in the road. Alfert says this seating arrangement should have been a red flag for Brasher. "An operator of a vehicle shouldn't drive it if anyone's in a dangerous position on it," Alfert said.

That didn't stop the pair from setting out from the Tank Barn and piloting the retired weapon down a path and over a low embankment installed "for the express purpose of creating an obstacle for vehicles such as the tank to navigate while being driven on the Premises," the lawsuit alleges.

During the joyride, Wright was thrown from the tank, run over by the vehicle's right track, and killed.

Immediately after the incident, the Rowland family announced that it was seeking "intensive counseling" for anyone who witnessed Wright's death, the LA Times reported. But three members of Wright's family say they are still keenly suffering the loss.

Wright was the only surviving parent to his two daughters, ages 22 and 24, their mother having died in 2009. While both young women were financially independent of Wright at the time of his death, the pair are suing for their father's funeral costs and loss of care. Wright's father, George, meanwhile, depended on Wright's income, according to the lawsuit.

"George is 80 years old, and he was dependent on [Wright]. They lived together and the adult son took care of his father," Alfert said. "There's an economic component where the father now has to go out into the marketplace and pay for someone to provide services his son had previously provided."

This is the first reported incident at Rowland's Tank Barn, where the Jelly Belly don once told *The Wall Street Journal* that he "plans to take customers out for rides." But it's hardly the first time a World War II tank has been involved in a fatal accident in the 21st century. Two Oregon residents were killed in October when they drove a vintage tank to a firing range, where it exploded.

"Our hearts and prayers go out to his family," Rowland told the *LA Times* in August. "We will do everything in our power to help them get through this enormous loss... Many of my family members have been inconsolable since the accident. There are no words to describe the grief we are experiencing."

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Cross-bearing 'Jesus' arrested at Apple store for trespass

May 3, 2016

yahoo.com

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — A man who calls himself "Philly Jesus" has a new cross to bear: He was arrested at a Philadelphia Apple store on a trespassing charge.

Philly Jesus' real name is Michael Grant. He dresses like Jesus, carries a large cross, preaches on sidewalks and poses for photos. He also performs baptisms in city fountains.

Police say the Apple store's manager told them Grant refused to leave Monday night despite being asked multiple times. They say his cross was blocking an aisle. He was handcuffed and arrested.

According to online court documents, Grant was charged with defiant trespassing and disorderly conduct. No lawyer information was listed. He was released after an arraignment early Tuesday.

Grant tweeted Tuesday that he was "free at last."

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The Haunting World of Jewish Female Demons and Spirits | Broadly

vice.com

The VICE Channels

by Gabriela Herstik
Apr 23 2016 1:50 PM

Untamed female sex demons, possessive evil spirits, brainless mud men, and even some exorcisms. Who says Jews don't know how to get down with the dark side?

In a world of *Paranormal Activity*, *The Witch* and the rise of progressive Satanists, where is the love for Jewish possessions, demons, and hauntings?

Jewish demons demand respect too. A religion over 3000 years old has compelling stories that take a look at the darker side of Judaism and the entities inhabiting its books. Enter: Lilith.



A relief in Babylon, considered to be an early depiction of Lilith 'Lilith' by John Collier, 1812 A performance of play called *The Dybbuk* about a Jewish woman's demonic possession. A performance of play called *The Dybbuk* about a Jewish woman's demonic possession. 'The Golem' by Warren Chriswell, 1997

According to the Babylonian Talmud, Lilith (which translates to night monster or night scream) was Adam's first wife. Though she was created from the same dirt God used to create Adam, she's said to be made of filth. (Unlike Eve, who would come later, and was made from Adam's rib.) Adam and Lilith did not get along, largely because Adam was angry that God made him from the dirt as his wife.

Lilith was willful and strong-minded. Adam tried his best to make her subservient but Lilith could not be tamed. Adam insisted on missionary sex whereas Lilith demanded to be on top. In an utter rage she screamed out, "Yaweh," the sacred name of God, then sprouted wings, rose into the air and flew away. When Adam's next wife, Eve, was created, it's said that God put Adam to sleep so he wouldn't see how she was made.

Lilith's legend grew throughout Mesopotamia and it was believed that she would fly around strangling or kidnapping newborns, possibly preying on pregnant women as well.

It was also believed that Lilith could fertilize herself with male sperm to give birth to her own demon babies. The Babylonian Talmud warns: "It is forbidden for a man to sleep alone in a house, lest Lilith get hold of him."

For Babylonian Jews of the world, life was filled with spirits and demons that inhabited every facet of the physical world. These spirits were everywhere. Nothing was safe. You couldn't even leave food under your bed without demons infesting it. Typically, they were demons in league with Asmodeus, King of the demons, and his Queen Agrat bat Mahlat, who had



A relief in Babylon, considered to be an early depiction of Lilith 'Lilith' by John Collier, 1812 A performance of play called *The Dybbuk* about a Jewish woman's demonic possession. A performance of play called *The Dybbuk* about a Jewish woman's demonic possession. *The Golem* by Warren Chriswell, 1997

10,000 demon attendants (squad goals, anyone?). The demon queen is considered a sacred angel of prostitution and on the Sabbath she's known to park her chariot and dance on the roofs of Jews.

Judaism even also has their own history of demonic possession and exorcism. In Jewish folklore, a *dybbuk* was an evil spirit that entered a living person, cleaving to his soul and causing mental illness. Souls that had sinned so greatly weren't allowed to transmigrate because they were *karet*, which means "cut-off by God" in Hebrew. Jewish exorcisms occurred all the way up to 1904, when Rabbi Ben-Zion Hazzan exorcised a *dybbuk* out of a woman.



Most rabbis, unless they're ultra-Orthodox or they're in the movie *The*

A relief in Babylon, considered to be an early depiction of Lilith 'Lilith' by John Collier, 1812 A performance of play called *The Dybbuk* about a Jewish woman's demonic possession. A performance of play called *The Dybbuk* about a Jewish woman's demonic possession. *The Golem* by Warren Chriswell, 1997

Possession, seem to be skeptical of demonic possession. "Judaism has a very strong prohibition against any kind of belief in witchcraft and magick and stuff like that," says Rabbi Ron Herstik, a Reform rabbi (and my father). "Every religion has a folk religion, what the common people believe, everyday people, and that's always existed in Judaism. The belief in things unseen, Herstik muses, "has to do with the unconscious workings of the mind, of the things we conjure up." He adds, "as we do that we create forces or we name forces and give voice to forces that we otherwise don't understand. "Magick is a way of saying there's a force out there that we can use to manipulate nature, to manipulate time, to manipulate fate and people who can do this are talented in some way whether they are witches or warlocks or whatever you want to call them. They are endowed with this power to be able to do that to basically manipulate reality through magick."

"You're not supposed to do that because witchcraft implies that there's a power paranormal to God's power or a power that can go behind God that can accomplish ends that human beings want and you're not supposed to screw around with God, basically," Herstik says. In other words playing God, is God's least favorite game.

But playing God is just too much fun, especially when you can create a golem, or a body without a soul. The most common way to create a golem is by shaping mud into a man like

figure, and using God's name to bring it to life. A golem is created by magic to serve its creator, and even appears in the Bible in Psalms. A famous legend has it that in 1720, Maharal of Prague created a golem to protect the Jewish people from anti-Semitic attacks. The golem got out of hand and Maharal removed God's name from its forehead, and it returned to dust.



A relief in Babylon, considered to be an early depiction of Lilith 'Lilith' by John Collier, 1812 A performance of play called *The Dybbuk* about a Jewish woman's demonic possession. A performance of play called *The Dybbuk* about a Jewish woman's demonic possession. 'The Golem' by Warren Chriswell, 1997

Demonesses, demons, evil spirits and soulless bodies inhabit the pages of Jewish legend. And if that isn't enough, the first mention of Satan derives from the Book of Job, translated from the Hebrew word for adversary. Satan who worked as God's roaming ambassador, is the one responsible for taking all of Job's riches and killing all of his family except his wife, in an effort to see if Job will denounce God, which he doesn't. Even though God was the one to order Satan to carry out his will, it's still good old Satan who gets the bad reputation. And although killing off family members is fine with God, practicing witchcraft and conjuring up spirits is still totally not.

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Just How Old Is C-Section Birth?

mentalfloss.com



Kristina Killgrove
 filed under: History
 Image credit:



Reproduction of woodcut, 1483.
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An 18th century Hungarian woman made history this week—her mummified remains preserve the earliest direct evidence of C-section. Sadly, neither she nor her full-term son survived. Which raises the question: Just how old is C-section birth, and when did women and babies start surviving it?

Ancient Roman relief carving of a midwife attending a woman giving birth. Wikimedia Commons // CC BY 4.0 Medieval caesarian on a deceased woman. Wikimedia Commons // CC BY 4.0 Successful Caesarean section performed by indigenous healers in Kahura, Uganda (1879). Wikimedia Commons // Public Domain Successful Caesarean section performed by indigenous healers in Kahura, Uganda (1879). Wikimedia Commons // Public Domain

CHILDBIRTH AS EVOLUTIONARY COMPROMISE

Basically since humans started walking upright, childbirth has been difficult for women. The brains of our hominin ancestors got larger and larger, with the

result that today's average newborn has a head 102 percent the size of its mother's bony pelvis. Yes, you read that right—our babies' heads are actually *larger* than our skeletal anatomy.

Obviously, an evolutionary compromise was worked out, so that humans could have large-brained babies and still walk upright. Babies' skulls bones can slide around and overlap to help them get out. The fetus also goes through a sort of dance when it's born, wiggling and turning with the help of contractions to make its way through the bony pelvis. And, perhaps most importantly, towards the end of pregnancy, a hormone is released that weakens the cartilage of the joints of the pelvis, letting it widen just enough for the baby to come out.

But we humans also rely on culture for our existence, and the same is often true for birth. The caesarean section—which includes the Latin root word for *cut*—involves extraction of a baby through a cut into the mother's uterus. Although the practice dates back thousands of years, women didn't survive it until comparatively recently.

HISTORICAL RECORDS OF C-SECTIONS

There is some argument among scholars that C-sections were performed in Egypt around 3000 BCE, but the earliest clear documentation in ancient texts comes from early Rome. The second king, Numa Pompilius (c. 700 BCE) passed a law called the *Lex Regia*, later renamed



the *Lex Caesarea* and reported in Justinian's *Digest* (11.8.2). This law forbade burying a pregnant woman until her offspring had been excised from her body. The reason stated for the law was that there was a small chance the baby would survive, but it is unclear if the law was religious in nature or whether it simply aimed to increase the population of tax-paying citizens. A similar reference to post-mortem delivery

comes from Sage Sutra, a practitioner of Hindu medicine around 600 BCE. But in neither case is it clear how often—if ever—this was carried out.

This means that the first person who was born by C-section is also hotly debated. Julius Caesar is often held up as the most famous example, with the assumption that his *cognomen*—third name or nickname—resulted from his style of birth. Sadly, it seems that the Roman author Pliny either made this up or was referring to a very distant ancestor of the Julii clan. Since women didn't survive C-sections in ancient Rome, Caesar's mother Aurelia, who lived well into her 60s, did not deliver him in that way.

Historical records of famous people born by C-section actually go back further than Caesar, though. Some scholars claim [PDF] that the earliest documented C-section produced the orator Gorgias in the 5th century BCE, but the historical evidence is murky. Although Pliny was wrong about Caesar, in his *Historia Naturalis* (VII.ix) he wrote that the celebrated Roman general Scipio Africanus was born in this manner in 236 BCE. If either of these cases is correct, there is evidence of viable offspring from C-sections nearly 2500 years ago. But these procedures were certainly only done when the mother died or was about to die in childbirth.

It wasn't until the 1500s that doctors began to expect women to survive the procedure. French physician François Rousset broke with medical tradition at the time and advocated performing C-sections on living women. In practice, though, it was still only performed as a last-ditch effort to save the newborn. Certainly some women survived C-sections from the 16th to 19th centuries, but it was still a very risky procedure that could easily lead to complications like endometritis or other infection. C-sections didn't become common until the 1940s, following advances in antibiotics that made them survivable.

ARCHAEOLOGY OF CHILDBIRTH AND C-SECTIONS

The infant mortality rate was very high in antiquity, as were rates of mothers dying in childbirth. Consequently, you might expect that archaeologists have found loads of mother-fetus burials. But very few exist. In fact, the number of pregnant female burials in the published archaeological literature from around the world is only about two dozen.



There are several potential reasons for this lack of evidence. First, archaeological methods got significantly more scientific in the 1970s, so more recent excavations are better at finding tiny fetal bones. Second, the mother could outlive the fetus, and the newborn could outlive the mother. Death at different times will not be obvious archaeologically as evidence of childbirth-related complications. Even when the mother and baby both die before birth, though, this may not be evident because of a phenomenon called “coffin birth”—

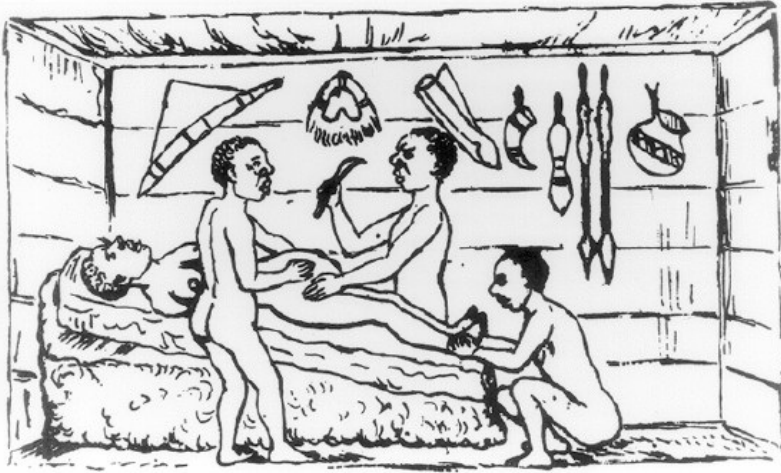
when the gases that build up within a corpse cause post-mortem “birth” of the fetus. And finally, cultural practices could be to blame for our lack of evidence—application of the Roman *Lex Caesarea*, for example, could result in a woman buried by herself and a viable newborn who grows up and dies much later.

Unfortunately for archaeologists, C-sections usually involve soft tissue only, so it is unlikely that we will ever find direct ancient evidence of it in a skeleton. There are two possible ways to see physical evidence of ancient C-sections. One is cut marks on the pelvis made around the time of the mother’s death by a surgeon. (Normally, C-sections don’t involve cut bones, but symphysiotomies—cutting through the front of the pelvis—can be done with or without accompanying C-sections to aid in delivering a baby.) The second is a mummy with an incision into the uterus and other physical changes associated with pregnancy and labor. At the International Conference on Comparative Mummy Studies earlier in April, the first ever direct evidence of an early C-section was presented. The case study, presented by anthropologist Ildikó Szikossy of the Hungarian Natural History Museum, involves a woman named Terézia Borsodi, who died in December 1794 during the birth of her sixth child. While historical records suggest that the baby boy was delivered alive, Terézia’s mummy shows she was likely already dead when the C-section was performed. The baby also did not survive, and they were buried together.

CHILDBIRTH IS BIOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL

Childbirth is both a biological and a cultural process, today and in the past. But while biological variation is consistent across all human populations, the cultural processes that can facilitate childbirth are quite varied. A quick glance at the rates of elective C-section around the world demonstrates this easily. So archaeologically, we should also expect to see variation in the lives, deaths, and burials of women and infants.

Archaeologists use skeletons, historical records, medical artifacts, and other clues from burials to reconstruct childbirth practices and interventions in the past. New advances in microscopic analysis of the bones of ancient fetuses are also revealing whether or not the baby was alive or stillborn. As the archaeological record gets better, and as excavation, recording, and analysis techniques advance, we should soon have better methods for



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understanding this key time in the lives of mothers and infants, and for figuring out when the earliest C-sections occurred.

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Kelowna city council votes to keep image of 'lake monster' Ogopogo

timescolonist.com



Ron Seymour , Kelowna Daily Courier /
The Canadian Press
April 25, 2016 11:09 AM



The mythical sea monster Ogopogo is shown on a city of Kelowna float in a handout photo. Ogopogo could get the heave-ho if councillors in Kelowna, B.C., decide to ditch images of the mythical lake monster from its parade float. A proposal for the city's new float stresses outdoor recreation to better reflect and promote the community. THE CANADIAN PRESS/HO-City of Kelowna

The mythical sea monster Ogopogo is shown on a city of Kelowna float in a handout photo. Ogopogo could get the heave-ho if councillors in Kelowna, B.C., decide to ditch images of the mythical lake monster from its parade float. A proposal for the city's new float stresses outdoor recreation to better reflect and promote the community. THE CANADIAN PRESS/HO-City of Kelowna

KELOWNA, B.C. - There'll be no heave-ho for Ogopogo with councillors in Kelowna voting to keep the mythical lake monster as the focus of the city's parade float.

Staff had proposed ditching the iconic creature in favour of an outdoor recreation theme for the city's new float, but politicians voted unanimously to stick with tradition.

A representation of Ogopogo, either a goofy one with big eyes or a menacing one with fearsome fangs, has appeared on the float for more than 50 years.

Ogopogo is a supposed sea serpent living in Okanagan Lake, and its legend goes back centuries to First Nations lore.

Its current image on the city float is well-travelled, with the float having logged 42,000 kilometres in the past five years and appearing in parades in 55 cities in the Pacific Northwest of the United and into Alberta.

Coun. Luke Stack said there was clearly widespread support for having the beast continue to feature prominently on the float, which will get a \$20,000 facelift.

"There's just lots of love for the Ogopogo," said Stack, sporting an pin of the creature on his lapel.

City staff had argued the float needed an update and proposed a theme emphasizing active living with depictions of bicycling, kayaking, and paddleboarding.

The idea was "not very original" and wouldn't separate Kelowna from other municipalities, Coun. Maxine DeHart said at Monday's meeting.

The mythical monster is part of the city's branding, DeHart said.

She noted that the legend of Ogopogo has attracted much publicity over the years, including visits to Kelowna by several Japanese film and television crews who've staged elaborate and costly searches for the beast.

Some of the outdoor recreation elements may be included in the new float, but after hearing council's discussion, recreation director Jim Gabriel promised that the float's "primary theme" would be Ogopogo. (Kelowna Daily Courier)

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Medieval Knights May Have Had PTSD : DNews

discovery.com

Dec 20, 2011 03:00 AM ET // by Emily Sohn



Medieval knights were not just thugs, but humans who likely felt the impact of their work.

Getty Images

- Medieval knights may have suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder.
- Often portrayed as courageous and cold-hearted killers, knights were human, too.

In movies, medieval knights are portrayed as courageous and loyal heroes who will fight to the death without fear or regret.

In reality, the lives of knights were filled with a litany of stresses much like those that modern soldiers deal with.

They were often sleep-deprived, exhausted and malnourished. They slept outside on hard ground, fully exposed to whatever weather befell them. And their lives were full of horror and carnage as they regularly killed other men and watched their friends die.

Faced with the trauma inherent in a life of combat, according to a new look at ancient texts, medieval knights sometimes struggled with despair, fear, powerlessness and delusions. Some may have even suffered from post-traumatic stress or related disorders, argues a Danish researcher, just as their modern-day counterparts do.

The research strives to add a dose of humanity to our understanding of knights, who are often considered cold and heartless killers.

"As a medievalist, it's a bit irritating to hear people say that the Middle Ages were just populated by brutal and mindless thugs who just wallowed in warfare," said Thomas Heebøll-Holm, a medieval historian at the University of Copenhagen. "I'm going for a nuanced picture of humans that lived in the past. They were people just like you and me, as far as we can tell."

Ever since the war in Vietnam, there has been a growing recognition that the terrors of battle, torture, terrorism and other horrific experiences can result in a type of severe psychological distress now known as PTSD. To be diagnosed with the disorder, people must suffer from uncontrollable and intense stress for at least a month after a horrifying event. Symptoms can include flashbacks, nightmares, depression and hyperactivity.

When soldiers go to war in modern times, Heebøll-Holm said, psychologists now recognize that the stresses they encounter can lower their psychological resistance until they finally succumb to anxiety disorders. Since medieval knights faced as many and possibly more hardships than modern soldiers do, he wondered if he might be able to find references to signs of trauma in warriors who fought during the Middle Ages.

In addition to other documents, Heebøll-Holm focused on three texts written by a 14th-century French knight named Geoffroi de Charny, who was also a diplomat and trusted adviser to King John II.

No one knows for sure why Charny wrote the documents, whose translated titles included "The Book of Chivalry" and "Questions Concerning the Joust, Tournaments and War." The most popular theory is that they were part of an effort to create an ideological program for the royal French chivalric order that

would rival the British equivalent.

Though many of these texts have been thoroughly analyzed already, Heebøll-Holm was the first to look between the lines through the lens of modern military psychology. And while it's hard to ever completely understand a culture that was so very different (and far more religious) than our own, Heebøll-Holm found a number of examples that would suggest at least the potential for trauma in medieval knights.

Among his writings, for example, Charny wrote:

"In this profession one has to endure heat, hunger and hard work, to sleep little and often to keep watch. And to be exhausted and to sleep uncomfortably on the ground only to be abruptly awakened. And you will be powerless to change the situation. You will often be afraid when you see your enemies coming towards you with lowered lances to run you through and with drawn swords to cut you down. Bolts and arrows come at you and you do not know how best to protect yourself. You see people killing each other, fleeing, dying and being taken prisoner and you see the bodies of your dead friends lying before you. But your horse is not dead, and by its vigorous speed you can escape in dishonour. But if you stay, you will win eternal honour. Is he not a great martyr, who puts himself to such work?"

Charny showed no signs of instability, Heebøll-Holm said, but he repeatedly expressed concern about the mental health of other knights. And there is no doubt that medieval knights suffered a lot, said Richard Kaeuper, a medieval historian at the University of Rochester in New York, who has translated and written extensively about Charny's "Book of Chivalry."

Tales from that era include all sorts of gruesome details, Kaeuper said. Many tell of warriors vomiting blood or holding their entrails in with their hands. One mentions a Castilian knight who gets a crossbolt stuck up his nose in his first fight. Another tells of a fighter getting slashed by a sword through his mouth. Again and again, there are references to bad food, uncomfortable conditions and relentless fighting.

After so many centuries, though, it can be challenging to interpret old texts, said Kaeuper, who was intrigued by Heebøll-Holm's theory. Part of the problem is that knights never psychoanalyzed themselves, at least not in print. Instead, they either offered advice to other knights about how to act in various situations or they simply recounted events.

One of the biggest differences between now and then, Kaeuper added, is that medieval knights were usually born into their elite and noble order, and they were trained from a young age to think of themselves as warriors who fought in the name of Christianity. Modern soldiers, on the other hand, often leave a very comfortable life for one of violence and trauma.

Knights "were not civilians who were suddenly thrust into this," Kaeuper said. "I think that makes a difference."

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Remains discovered under Coventry car park linked with mysterious Knights Templar



Knights of a religious military order known as Knights Templar, founded in 1118 to protect Christian pilgrims

Knights of a religious military order known as Knights Templar, founded in 1118 to protect Christian pilgrims

Mystery surrounds archaeological remains found on a site being developed for Coventry's newest secondary school.

The remains, apparently of a building, have been found under the car park of the former Land Registry site, on Torrington Avenue - which is currently being converted into Finham Park II.

Developers made the discovery as they dug trenches in the car park prior to starting the construction of the new school's sports hall.

The area has strong links to the Knights Templar and the land was used to generate cash for the protection of the Holy Land during the Middle Ages. That has led some to speculate that the discovery could relate to the medieval knights.

But sources at Coventry City Council believe it is far more likely the discovery is the foundations of Fletchamstead Hall, a Jacobean manor house constructed in the area in the 1600s.

Discoveries at the site are currently being assessed by archaeologists to establish precisely what has been found.

Few organizations have captured the world's collective imagination like the Knights Templar, who were among the wealthiest and most powerful of the Western Christian military orders and were prominent actors in Christian finance.

The organisation existed for nearly two centuries during the Middle Ages.



Trench dug at the site of Finham Park II where building remains have been

Trench dug at the site of Finham Park II where building remains have been discovered

Coun Roger Bailey, who is a registered tour guide and has a keen interest in the city's heritage, said the discovery was "very interesting".

He said: "It's quite an important area around there because it was Knights Templar land around there.

"I have got a feeling there are a lot of links to the Templars. That would mean it could have links to the Vatican and the pope.

"Until recently, the Vatican owned land in Coventry.

"The Knights Templar owned anything from the Fletchamstead Highway to Templar School. I wonder if whatever has been found has origins in the Knight Templar.

discovered

“They used the land to generate money to send fortifications to the Holy Land.”



Fletchamstead Hall

Fletchamstead Hall

Russell Plester, Finham Park II head teacher, said the discovery was exciting but had little impact on the building schedule. The new school is set to open its doors in September.

He said: “I believe the builders have found the remains of a Jacobean manor house.

“It has been concreted over for the car park of the Land Registry building. I don’t think they found a lot, a team went in and did some archaeological work.

“It’s where the sports hall is going, it’s not slowed down the building work in general, but it

may have delayed the sports hall construction by about a week.”

Reports on what has been found at the site are expected to be finalised in the next few weeks.

Comments

duchboy

the labour council have done this from would war two wipeing cov history off the map

charlinelynch

Like the rest of important old places in Coventry.... It gets pulled down or built on.. Coventry is loosing all its history, soon Coventry will be just one of those city's with no history, and even if it kept it would not be looked after just kept in ruins... Not meny People in Coventry wants to keep its history or keep it safe and clean.

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Idaho official: Kobe Bryant's remarks help save potato truck

April 25, 2016

yahoo.com



FILE - In this March 30, 2012, file photo, the Idaho Potato Commission displays its six-ton tuber replica on the street in front of the Idaho Capitol in Boise. The Idaho Potato Commission says its traveling advertisement, the Great Big Idaho Potato Truck, could roll on indefinitely. (AP Photo/John Miller, File)

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EAGLE, Idaho (AP) — Kobe Bryant's recent mention of the Great Big Idaho Potato Truck might have helped save the traveling advertisement from a premature retirement, according to the head of a state agency that promotes Idaho potatoes.

The recently retired Los Angeles Lakers guard remarked on the red truck while talking with an ESPN reporter during one of his final games, The Capital Press reported (<http://bit.ly/1UcftKI>).

The truck hauls a 6-ton replica Russet Burbank. It's on its fifth national tour to help charities and raise awareness of Idaho's most famous vegetable.

Frank Muir, Idaho Potato Commission president and CEO, said ESPN sideline reporter Heather Cox told him that before a recent interview, Bryant referenced the running story line of the commission's ads: an Idaho potato grower's search for the "missing" potato truck. Cox is a spokeswoman for the commission.

"How long have you been working with Idaho potatoes?" Bryant asked Cox, nicknamed "Spud" by professional athletes. "Have they found that truck yet?"

The Idaho Potato Commission was considering retiring the potato truck after the current tour, which covers 25,000 miles, Muir said. But comments like Bryant's demonstrate why it must stay on the road, he said.

Muir believes the commission is now leaning toward keeping the truck going as long as the public is eager to see it.

"The feedback we're getting from growers is, 'Why would you take it off the road?'" Muir said. "We continue to have more requests for (truck appearances) than we can fulfill."

The commission budgeted \$700,000 for the current tour.

Highlights include stops at the Kentucky Derby, a New England chili cook-off, SeaFair in Seattle, the premiere of "Idaho the Musical" in Las Vegas and a photo opportunity in which the truck will float on a barge through New York Harbor.

Information from: The Capital Press (Ore.),
<http://www.capitalpress.com/washington>

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Medical experts pinpoint psychological worry as the main cause

DO NOT FEAR KORO...

A PANEL of medical experts today pin-pointed psychological fear as the main cause of the current Singapore koro "epidemic" — a retraction of the male sexual organ.

This was their official medical theory at a Health Ministry Press conference this morning.

There have been

widespread rumours that koro is caused by eating the pork of pigs recently vaccinated in a mass campaign to combat swine fever.

This has led to almost a standstill in the sale of pork both in markets, eating stalls and restaurants.

No foundation

The panel emphatically declared that there was absolutely no foundation whatsoever that koro was connected with pork eating or the recent outbreak of swine fever, as this fever only affected pigs.

SINGAPORE, Monday

As for the vaccination, they said, it was only a combinatorial vaccine, swine fever and did not have any effect on other animals let alone human beings.

The panel led by Dr. Ho Guan Lim, Permanent Secretary to the Ministry and Director of Medical Services, comprised:

Dr. Yeoh Seang Aun, Deputy Director of Medical Services, Dr. Ghee Ah Leng, senior consultant, Dr. Yap Mow

Foo, medical superintendent of Woodbridge Hospital and Mr. Chong Tong Fatt, Director of Primary Production in the Ministry of National Development.

Rumours

Since Oct. 28, when the rumours first became rife that koro was caused by the eating of pork, there was on an average 80 people daily calling at the outdoor dispensaries of govern-

ment hospitals claiming that they were suffering from the disease.

None of these cases, Dr. Ho stressed, required any specific treatment. They were only assured that koro was not harmful and that it would cease in a few minutes.

None of the cases required admission into hospital and above everything else none of them died.

Explaining the disease in more detail, Dr. Gwee, who has done research on the subject and published a paper in the Singapore Medical Journal in 1963, said:

"Koro is a Malay word and it is a disease of the mind. A person suffering from it is deluded into believing that the male organ would shrink into the abdomen resulting in death."

Injury

"So they try to stop the shrinking and in the process cause injury to the organ. In fact koro itself has no harmful effects and ceases in a few minutes if the afflicted person just ignores it."

Dr. Gwee said that the main cause of the present "epidemic" in

Singapore was the fear that one could get the disease by eating pork.

"In fact, any type of fear can cause koro. Another cause is cold climate, but the important thing to remember is that it is not harmful and if one gets it one should do just nothing."

Mr. Chong said that the widespread rumours had had a very drastic effect on the sale of pork which could be illustrated by the slaughter of pigs at the abattoir — 1,200 to 1,400 a day before the rumours as compared with the present daily average of only 100.

Tin is heading for a record year

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. — Tin production this year is heading towards a post-war record, according to latest Government statistics. The January-September output at 54,600 tons is only 11,821 tons short of last year's record-breaking total of 66,421 tons. If the average monthly production of 6,000 tons is maintained for the last three months of this year, a total output of 72,000 tons should be recorded — making 1967 the fourth best year in tin mining. An output of 82,000 tons was recorded in 1959, 73,800 tons in 1961, and 72,326 tons in 1958.

A bid to break monopoly

THE Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce today set up an eight-man working committee as the first step towards breaking the shipping monopoly.

The committee, headed by Tan Sri T. H. Tan, the ACCC president, will hold its first meeting here tomorrow.

The deputy chairman of the Malaysian Rubber Exchange, Incie Abu Bakar bin Pawancher,

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon.

and two Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce representatives were present at the ACCC meeting today.

Tomorrow, the new working committee will discuss the formation of a National Shippers' Council along the lines that are already established in Singapore.

Information

This council, which will have closely with its Singapore counterpart, will review the whole situation and will arrange meetings with members of the Far East Freight Conference for cheaper rates.

It will comprise representatives from the Malay chambers of commerce, the Indian chambers of commerce and the States of Malaysia Chamber of Commerce. The working committee will consider collecting information on the number of ships owned by members of the freight conference, their routes and freight rates.

An ACCC committee member, Datu Chai Peng Hong, said that this information was necessary

to deal effectively with the monopoly problem.

There might be sent to all ACCC members asking them to get the necessary details.

Incie Abu Bakar said that careful planning was required to break the freight conference which he described as "well established and powerful".

But if there was proper organisation there was no reason why the freight should not be reduced.

Freight route

"The mere fact that something is being done will I think have some effect on the freight conference," he explained.

The first obvious thing to do was for Malaysia to form its own shipping line he added.

Countries along the freight conference route, such as Ceylon, Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia could then combine to make their positions stronger.

Naked boy, 16, and girl, 5

IPOM, Mon. — Police arrested a 16-year-old boy who was found with a 5-year-old girl in a public toilet at Ipoh, Perak, today about yesterday afternoon. Both of them were naked.

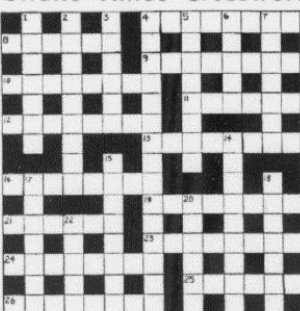
10 THUGS EXILED

PERANG, Mon. — Police today exiled 10 thugs to various districts on the island and Province Wellesley for three years under the Prevention of Crime Ordinance. They were arrested by

the anti-secret societies branch and CID personnel during a recent raid.

The thugs belong to Gang 101, Malay Gang, 8 Immortals and Gang 88.

Straits Times Crossword

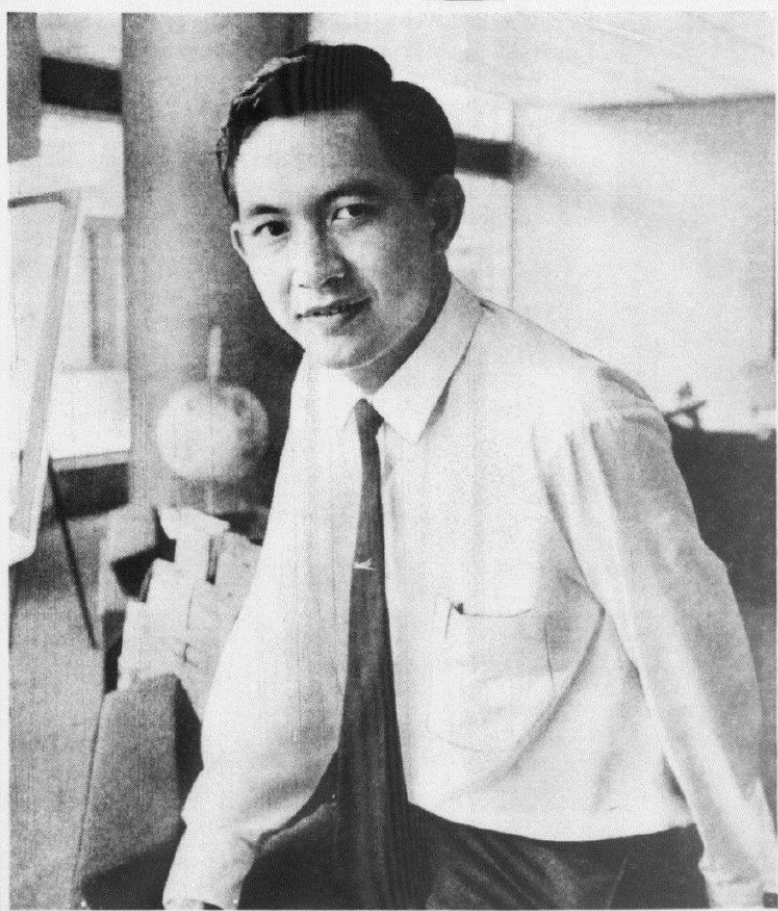


- ACROSS**
1. (10) What's the meaning of "koro"?
 2. (10) The current cost of an order?
 3. (10) A politician who doesn't go into the field?
 4. (10) See 1.
 5. (10) On the women of the house, hold the "young"?
 6. (10) It's a mistake to be in 12's place?
 7. (10) A group of many hands proverbially?
 8. (10) The best of 17? Composed about to do nothing in return?
 9. (10) He's one with an epistle afternoon?
 10. (10) Like 8 or 13, perhaps, in heaven the Bear's last his tail?
 11. (10) Always, having "wines" like one with wine?
 12. (10) One way to put 3 on a milk?
 13. (10) A woman into the B.M.A.?
 14. (10) A healthy result of a blow under the ear?
- DOWN**
1. (10) Back with a cough who gets ill?
 2. (10) Tantalus, as 10 was, and more?
 3. (10) Favorite (used) in perhaps goodness?
 4. (10) Pondered in obedience to the command...

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A Delightful Complexion Bloom

Wrinkles are really "river-bed" of dry cells caused by the plasma colloids (the water carriers) of the skin drying out through the passage of time and the drying effect of exposure to wind and weather. To bring new life and loveliness to your skin and stop wrinkle-dryness, smooth in a film of beautifying oil of Glaxo before making-up. This will nourish your skin at depth and give your complexion a delightful dewy bloom.

... Margaret Merrill

In Greek mythology, Laelaps (Λαίλαψ) was a legendary dog who never failed to catch what he was hunting. He was a gift from Zeus to Europa.



The Death of Procris, Piero di Cosimo, right side Laelaps c. 1500 Oil on panel, 65 x 183 cm National

Gallery, London

But Procris lay among the white wind-flowers,
 Shot in the throat. From out the little wound
 The slow blood drained, as drops in autumn showers
 Drip from the leaves upon the sodden ground.
 None saw her die but Lelaps, the swift hound,
 That watched her dumbly with a wistful fear,
 Till at the dawn, the hornèd wood-men found
 And bore her gently on a sylvan bier,
 To lie beside the sea,—with many an uncouth tear.
 Austin Dobson: Old World Lyrics.

The hound was passed down to King Minos of Crete. Minos fell ill and called Procris of Athens to his aid. When she cured him he gave her Laelaps and a javelin that never missed its target. Procris's husband decided to use the hound to hunt the Teumessian fox, a fox that could never be caught. This was a paradox, a dog who always caught his prey and a fox that could never be caught. The chase went on for quite a while until Zeus turned both to stone, perplexed by their contradictory fates.

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Lake Beneath Antarctic Ice Could Hold Hidden Life : DNews

discovery.com

Discovery News

Apr 27, 2016 08:16 AM ET // by Kieran Mulvaney



Scientists believe that lakes beneath the Antarctic ice sheet may harbor previously unknown life.

Step right up, folks, and witness Antarctica, the amazing shrinking continent. This polar desert may be the coldest, windiest continent on the planet, but Antarctica has everything the modern adventurer would want, from exotic wildlife to awe-inspiring landscapes to advanced research facilities and more. No amount of showmanship can express the value of the continent of Antarctica more than glimpses of what the polar landscape has to offer the curious traveler. But Antarctica is also under threat like never before in human history. So now is the time to explore the planet's coldest continent before it's too late. VIDEO: Who Controls Antarctica

Thinkstock/iStock

One of the first stops on any visit to Antarctica should be to see the animals who have basically become a sort of mascot for the continent, the always dapper penguins. While the majestic emperor penguin may be the most famous species in the southern continent, they aren't the only penguins in Antarctica or even the most populous. The Antarctic Circle also hosts four other varieties of penguins, including Adélie penguins, chinstrap penguins, gentoo penguins and macaroni penguins. These birds total in the tens of millions when all the

species are combined, but their ranks have been thinned right along with the ice as climate

change takes its toll. The shrinking continent threatens both their breeding grounds and food supply, particularly for emperor, Adélie and chinstrap penguins, studies have found. Penguins Have Bad Taste

Thinkstock/iStock



Penguins aren't the only animals that call Antarctica home. Fish, albatross, seals and other animals share the landscape and can be seen on a typical Antarctic voyage. One of the most easily spotted animals are the whales that swim in the Antarctic Ocean. Many species can be found around the southern continent, including blue whales, killer whales, humpbacks, sperm whales and more. In fact, earlier this year, researchers reported the discovery of a new whale

species after detecting its unique song pattern. As with penguins, climate change has had an impact on whales for the worse, affecting their migration patterns and food supply. Sperm Whale Caught on Camera in Rare Encounter

Thinkstock/iStock



Although not as famous as its northern cousin, aurora australis, the Southern Lights, bathe the Antarctic skies in an brilliant green glow. The light show can be credited to solar particles entering Earth's atmosphere. The Southern Lights (pictured over the National Science Foundation's South Pole Station) are less accessible than the Northern Lights, which can be seen over many populated areas. In the south, however, there is little land over which the aurora is viewable. The

Southern Lights are also only viewable between March and September, when the days are dark most or all of the time depending on the month. Cruises only travel to Antarctica during the summer months, however, between November and March. VIDEO: Massive Northern and Southern Lights Explained

Jonathan Berry / National Science Foundation

More than 100 years ago, Capt. Robert Falcon Scott led the ill-fated British Antarctic, also known as Terra Nova, expedition. The mission cost him his life but cemented his legacy as a



hero. Built in 1911 by crew members of Scott's expedition, the Terra Nova hut is located on Cape Evans on the west side of Ross Island. Measuring 50 feet long (15 meters) by 25 (7.6 meters) wide, the hut was constructed as a base from which Scott would set upon the expedition to the South Pole and could house up to 33 men. More than 8,000 artifacts are preserved in the hut, including furniture, various food items, scientific instruments, photographs and a darkroom.

Forgotten Discoveries of Scott's Antarctica

NASA



Scott's hut isn't the only historic home on the Antarctic site-seeing tour. Ernest Shackleton's hut at Cape Royds, which also conveniently is adjacent to a colony of Adélie penguins, still stands more than 100 years after it was built. Constructed during Shackleton's second expedition to Antarctica between 1907 and 1909, in addition to the various artifacts one might expect an early 20th-century polar explorer to have handy, the historic site also held a cache of 25

cases of whiskey, 12 cases of brandy and six of port. According to the U.S. Antarctic Program, the explorers relied on strong spirits to cope with the long insomnia-inducing days and bone-chilling nights. 100-Year-Old Negatives Recovered From Antarctica

NASA

Located at the southern tip of Ross Island, McMurdo Station has been the primary Antarctic research facility for the United States since its completion in 1956. The site hosts all the facilities needed for a remote research community, including but not limited to dormitories, administrative buildings, a fire station, a power plant, a water treatment plant, stores, clubs, warehouses, a science support center, a harbor, landing strips, a runway and a helicopter pad. McMurdo supports research programs stretching over a variety of disciplines including astrophysics, glaciology, integrated system science, ocean and atmospheric sciences, according to the U.S. Antarctic program, which also hosts a live view of the research station online. Antarctic Sea Ice May Force Research Stations to Move



U.S. Antarctic Program

Don't let the name fool you. Deception Island harbors an honest-to-goodness tourist attraction. In addition to the natural beauty of the area, the site offers a natural hot spring in which travelers can take a soak. For visitors looking to take a trip through time, the island also houses the rusting remnants of a former whale oil outpost, abandoned in the early 1930s when whale oil prices plummeted, as well as is a few buildings that made up a British base, left desolate in the 1970s. Above, an American researcher warms his hands on a seaside fumarole in this photo taken in 1962. Why does Deception Island seem to welcome visitors but discourage settlement? The island is the site of an active volcano, which explains why the only people willing to attempt an extended stay these days are scientists. DNews Video: Meet the Guy Who Went Into a Volcano

NOAA



When not blocked by icebergs, rendering it impassable, Lemaire Channel offers visitors a postcard-perfect view of Antarctica. Lemaire Channel is roughly 7 miles (11 kilometers) long and runs between Booth Island and the Antarctic peninsula. Ships traveling the channel will be greeted by snow-capped mountains on both sides. The channel also happens to be a prime spot for whale-watching, with humpbacks or killer whales occasionally following a

ship's wake. Drifting Iceberg Spins Out Ocean Tunes

CIA World Factbook



No trip to Antarctica would be complete without a visit to the South Pole. Fortunately for the modern traveler, there's no need to travel by foot to get there. The most common means of seeing the South Pole is in a helicopter. In addition to the Amundsen–Scott South Pole Station seen in the Southern Lights slide, the South Pole also carries all of the flags of the nations that lay claim to some slice of Antarctica. The site also contains the Ceremonial South Pole, a

metallic sphere on top of a red and white striped pole. Above, the American flag is repositioned every year on New Year's Day to account for the movement of ice. DNews Video: What Will Happen When the North and South Poles Flip?

NOAA

British scientists believe they may have discovered a large lake beneath the ice of the Antarctic continent, one that may harbor life that has lain undisturbed for millennia. They believe the lake, which measures approximately 87 by 12 miles, is connected to a canyon system that in total is roughly 680 miles in extent. The scientists first published their finding in the journal *Geology* and expanded upon them this month at the European Geosciences Meeting in Vienna.

Their conclusions are based on discerning faint grooves in the ice after closely examining satellite imagery of the area, in a region of the frozen continent known as Princess Elizabeth Land.

"We've seen these strange, linear channels on the surface, and are inferring these are above massive, 1000-kilometer-long channels, and there's a relatively large subglacial lake there too," Martin Siegert of Imperial College London, a member of the research team, told *New Scientist*.

Antarctic Lake May Contain Extreme Life Forms

Siegert further stated that researchers from China and the US have flown over the region and gathered ice penetrating radar data, which they hope will confirm the presence of the under-ice features.

"We're meeting in May to look at the data," he said. "It will be a very good test of our hypothesis about the lake and channels."

Although big, the putative lake would not be the largest discovered under the frozen ice cap of the Antarctic. That honor belongs to Lake Vostok, which measures 160 by 30 miles — which would make it the sixth-largest in the United States, more than twice as large as Utah's

Great Salt Lake and bested only by the Great Lakes.

Antarctic Lava Lake Huffs, Puffs Like Dozing Dragon

In 2012, Russian scientists drilled a borehole into Lake Vostok, which has been covered by ice for 15 million years and lies more than two and a quarter miles below the surface, and claimed to have found evidence of unusual life. However, their findings were met with skepticism and controversy because the water samples were contaminated with fluid used to help the drilling process; last year, having corrected their technique, they began to drill for a second time.

An American team that drilled into Lake Whillans — a sliver of water just 7 feet deep, which is half a mile below the surface of the Ross Ice Shelf — in 2013 was able to avoid such contamination issues by deploying a series of sterilization measures. To their astonishment, they found microbial life in a density comparable to that in many of the world's deep oceans, and a complex community of bacteria and archaea at least 4,000 species strong.

The shock of finding such an array of life, living in apparent isolation and far from the reach of sunlight, was compounded by the discovery by a team deploying an ROV two years later of a species of translucent fish, as well as some small crustaceans. Where exactly the nutrients come from to sustain such life remains to be determined, and the story may not be the same for every lake; subglacial lakes near the coast such as Whillans, for example, may have a very different history than the more isolated Vostok.

But it's possible that these most unlikely of ecosystems are fed by some form of chemosynthesis, in which bacteria and other microbes feed on minerals that descend from the ice above or seep through the marine sediments below.

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The Legend of Bidadari Lake (Angel Lake)

blogspot.com

<http://xastory.blogspot.com/2009/06/legend-of-bidadari-lake-angel-lake.html>

Tales From My Land

home for lots of tales you can tell to your grandchildren

Jun 19, 2009

There was time when the lake became such a magical place. The purity of the water was never touched by human contamination. The lake was surrounded by shade trees and that made the air was very refreshing. That magical place was very attractive for angels. They usually came down to earth and bathed in the lake and felt the fresh water. The lake then became their playground. One day the angels were bathing in the lake. They were very comfort with the surrounding and didn't realize that there were human eyes watching. These eyes were fascinated with the beauty of the angels. Those eyes were belonged to Awang Sukma. Awang Sukma was young man who lived near the lake. He liked to collect birds when the tangerine trees were flowering. He rubbed sap in laths of bamboos. Those laths were called pulut. The pulut were put in the branched of flowers. When a bird came to the flower, the wings would stick to the pulut and the bird couldn't get off. And because what he did, Awang Sukma was known as Datu Pulut. Awang Sukma liked to play seruling when he was waiting the birds. His playing was well-known so he also was called Datu Suling.

That day, Awang Sukma was doing his day work. He was sitting under a tree waiting for the birds. The breezy of wind was so cozy and made him sleep. He woke up by surprise when he heard sounds of people. He looked for the sounds and he found beautiful girls were bathing in the lake. Awang Sukma stood still in his place, behind big tree. Then he saw shawls were hung on a branch of tree near him. "I've never seen such beautiful shawls." Awang Sukma touched a shawl with his hand. "It's very soft too. They must be angels that villagers talked about." Awang Sukma took that shawl and put it under his shirt.

The girls finished their bath and prepared to leave the lake. They wore their clothes on and their slaves. Suddenly one of them screamed "I can't find my shawl. Where is it?"

"Where were you put it?" asked the other girl.

"I put here, next to my cloth" the girl said. She looked panic.

"Ok. Don't panic. We'll look for it." Her friends tried to comfort her.

Awang Sukma was still standing in silence behind the big tree watching the girls looking the shawl that he took.

"We've looked everywhere and we can't find it. Maybe a dear took it" one of them said.

"We have to go. It's getting dark."

"No, don't leave me here." the girl started to cry.

"But we can't stay. I'm sorry, my sister. May gods protect you tonight." they hold their sister. The other girls then tied their shawls in their waist and hold the tips. Then slowly they started to fly. Awang Sukma was surprise to see them flying.

After everybody left, Awang Sukma went out from his hiding and walked to the girl that left behind. "Are you, ok?" he asked softly.

"No, I'm not ok. I'm alone here. I'm lost. I can't go home" the girl was crying.

"Don't worry. You can stay with me." Awang Sukma said gently, gave his charm to her "I'm a nice person. I won't do harm to you."

The girl then stayed with Awang Sukma. Time passed by, Awang Sukma and the angel girl had married. For these years, Awang Sukma still didn't tell her about the shawl. He still hid the shawl in the rice barn.

But you can't hide a bad secret forever. It will show up and eat you someday.

And that day came for Awang Sukma was when a black chicken entered his barn and made it messy. The wife took broom to scare the chicken and got rid of it. Suddenly her eyes saw something shiny in the rice. She approached it and was very surprise when she saw something that very familiar for her long time ago.

Awang Sukma entered the barn and was shock when he saw his wife was standing there holding a shawl that he hid all this time.

"It was you?" his wife asked him. She could not believe that her own husband who took her shawl. "How could you do this?" she was very disappointed with Awang Sukma.

"I'm sorry. I just... I don't want you leave me." Awang Sukma tried to give explanation and hoped his wife would forgive him.

"I have to go. I can't stay here. I don't belong here." His wife tied the shawl to her waist and flew. She left Awang Sukma cried alone.

Since then Awang Sukma swore that he or his progeny would never keep black chicken. It was a bad luck for him. The lake that was used to bathe for angels was called Bidadari Lake or in English -Angel Lake. You can find the lake at Pematang Gadung Village, South Kalimantan.

You know, Arya Menak had the same story with Awang Sukma. They both married with beautiful angel and they also had the same destiny, being left alone when their wife found their shawl.

So let me give you advices about how to win a girl heart:

Rule number one: do not peep when they were taking a bath at the lake. That's not polite. Just wait till they finish and then introduce your self.

Rule number two: do not steal her cloth, make her cry and then you show up as her knight, pretending like you can save her from her pain. That's not a gentleman at all. Being her knight is good but never be the person who also gives that pain.

Rule number three: do not blame your mistake to a chicken. It's already its nature to eat rice. You have to responsible for your own behavior. In this story, the girl left because she was disappointed to her husband for hiding her shawl not because black chicken was a sign for a bad luck.

Rule number four: if the start is good, the end will good. If the start is bad, the end will bad. You can not hide 'dead fish forever', sweetheart. The smell will go around someday.

 Posted by Xa Story at 11:11 AM

Labels: The Legend of Bidadari Lake (Angel Lake)

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The Legend of Stingy Jack | Historic Mysteries

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HISTORIC MYSTERIES

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astronal October 29, 2015
Legends

It is common knowledge that the long standing traditions of Hallowe'en

originally stemmed from old pagan celebrations marking the end of the summer harvest. The very title of Hallowe'en is a contraction of the original identity of the festival *All Hallows Eve*. Some of these customs have survived to become familiar in today's version of the annual revelry. The custom of *Trick or Treating* is one of the staples of the entire celebration. Other activities on this day all tend to follow similar themes that highlight the macabre, but in a much more secular fashion than it's former style.



Did these menacing pumpkins keep Stingy Jack at bay?

If there was one image that perfectly summed up the nature of Hallowe'en overall, then it has to be the sinister looking image of the Jack O'Lantern. Aside from dressing up in costumes and trick-or-treating with their parents and/or adults, perhaps one of the most anticipated activities that any child relishes with glee is carving out pumpkins according to their

imaginations. The origins of the Jack O'Lantern is a myth that is open to conjecture that no-one can really confirm to truth.

One of the more popular origins of the Jack O'Lantern surrounds a blacksmith known as Stingy Jack. According to local folklore, Jack was infamous for being a two-faced, deceitful schemer that thrived on manipulating people. Word of his renown reached Lucifer who took more than a passing interest in this unpopular man and put plans in motion to meet him. When Jack came across the Devil, the Dark Lord posed as a deceased individual one evening in the darkened hills in rural Ireland. Even though he was as drunk as he was often seen, he was sober enough to understand that a corpse would not object to post-mortem interference. Jack rolled over his victim and was utterly shocked to see the face of the Devil looking up at him. Rightly or wrongly, Jack considered that his time was up and begged for a final request which was granted. Jack took Lucifer to the nearest tavern for a last drink.

One drink turned into another and then another and before too long the consumption of alcohol exceeded demand and there was nothing left for the pair to drink. When it was time to settle up, Jack casually turned to new drinking partner and demanded that the Devil pay the

money. Somehow Jack managed to persuade Satan to transform himself into a piece of silver. The instant that this was done, Jack rammed the coin into his pocket where a crucifix was waiting. The Devil agreed to Jack's demands not to be hunted down for a decade if the Devil was released from his prison.

Once this amnesty was reached, the Devil found Jack once more and fell for a variation of the same trick again. This time however, Jack insisted on an apple from a nearby tree. While Satan selected an apple, Jack carved four crucifix's on the bark of the tree and offers Satan a release on the condition that he does not go to Hell. Once again there is little choice but to submit to the man's wishes. Jack continued the rest of his life safe in the knowledge that he outsmarted the Devil not once, but twice. The years of alcoholism finally took their toll and Jack found himself standing ahead of the Pearly Gates where he was turned away by St Peter. Heaven, as many people knew, is not a place that a lying, deceitful drunk would be welcome at. Not too downbeat, Jack headed towards Hell where his nemesis was biding his time to get revenge. The Devil also refused him entry, citing the agreement that he was coerced into making when Jack was very much alive.

Even though neither afterlife allowed him to reside within their confines, the Devil did more than merely reject Jack's approach. Jack was given an ember with which he could be marked as a spirit being. Jack found a turnip and hollowed it out, turning it into a makeshift lantern. Ever since then, the Jack of the Lantern's ghost could be seen wandering aimlessly around the Irish countryside, hoping to find a place to rest. Heaven and Hell were not the only places that kept Jack's futile search at bay. Local residents came up with a concept to prevent Jack from entering their properties on All Hallows Eve. Each home carved a menacing face into a range of vegetables and prominently displayed them on doorsteps and in windows with a burning ember just like Jack's lantern.

Irish settlers brought this idea to America in the 19th century, but the Americans of the time used the more plentiful indigenous pumpkin to ward off Jack. From that to this, the tradition has worked admirably. Jack is still out there, and is still looking.

Sources

History of the Jack O'Latern

Stingy Jack

Stingy Jack and the Legend of the Jack O'Lantern

Mentalfloss

estronal

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Legend of the Faceless People of Monroe, Connecticut - Itchy Fish

itchyfish.com

June 17, 2010 by Contributor

In the tiny town of Monroe in Fairfield County, Connecticut, there is a desolate old barn in the woods that has been boarded up long ago. There is no paved road leading to the barn, and the dirt road that does exist is covered with gnarled tree trunks and roots. Yet if you were to hike through the woods you might hear strange voices coming from inside the barn, sounds like they might belong to otherworldly beings. If you arrive at nightfall you will see a glimpse of light behind a crack between the boards that cover the windows. No shadows can be made out, nothing human, anyways. What lurks within the solid walls of this two-story barn that lacks a fresh coat of paint?

Called by the locals "The House of the Faceless People", legend has it that a group of unfortunates live in this old barn with one caretaker who is never seen leaving or entering it. Presumably the caretaker goes out only at midnight with his charges so that they can at least get some fresh air. The sunlight is not favorable to these individuals who have no face: they have no eyes, nose, or ears, just a mouth outlined with pale lips, and bony hands grasping around constantly as if trying to find their way in the world. Curiosity seekers who are clever enough to locate the old barn are usually chased away by the caretaker. Yet there have been reports in Monroe of the occasional faceless person who decided to take a stroll through the woods and make his way to the main road when the caretaker was not looking. The unfortunate would unintentionally frighten a citizen on the way to the grocery store or bank, darting out in front of the car only to have the driver startled, thinking a wild animal was in the way.

The caretaker of the faceless people remains apart from the community, most likely to maintain the privacy of himself and his special "family." Even the faceless people of this house deserve respect, too, accepted by society or not. While many questions remain about these people, especially where they came from and how they came to be faceless, the barn remains impenetrable to all who pass it, daring to walk up close to the building, if only to scared away by the caretaker. To date, none of the faceless people have ever been caught on camera, but perhaps that is due to the fact they are clever enough to move quickly away from the rest of the town of Monroe.

<http://www.vpr.net/episode/32591/>

<http://www.abovetopsecret.com/forum/thread491650/pg1>

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Ghostly Goings On: The Traditions and Legends of St. Mark's Eve

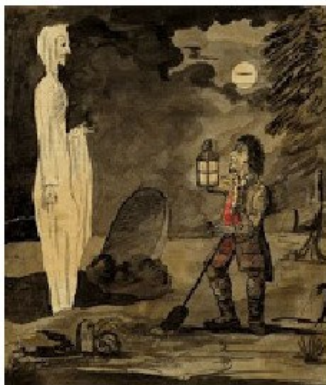
blogspot.com

<http://darkdorset.blogspot.com/2016/04/ghostly-goings-on-traditions-and.html>



Dark Dorset Online Scrapbook is an archive of current and past events relating to local history, folklore and mysteries that can be discovered in the English county of Dorset.

Sunday, 24 April 2016



Saint Mark's Eve, tonight all the souls or wraiths of those who are destined to die over the next twelve months go walkabout, turning up at the church in which they will be buried.

With so much paranormal activity tonight, it is appropriate that anyone born on St Mark's Eve can see spirits. Not only that, but they are also blessed with a startlingly useful ability: the power to see the stars at midday.

St. Marks Eve was once a prize night for lovesick girls wishing to discover their true love by supernatural means. Any inquisitive girl would place a hazel nut amongst the hot embers of the hearth, naming it after her sweetheart and say:

*"If you love me, pop and fly,
If not lie, lie there silently".*

If her boyfriend was destined to be her husband the nut would jump away.

Another popular love divination required the girl to hang up her smock by the fireside and quietly sit naked and alone in the darkness. If the ritual was performed correctly, the inquisitive girl would be rewarded at midnight by seeing the wraith of her future husband appear and turn the garment.

*On Saint Mark's Eve, at twelve o'clock,
The fair maid will watch her smock,
To find her husband in the dark,
By praying unto good Saint Mark.*

Extract taken from the *Chambers Book of Days* April 25th 1864, details of St. Mark's Eve.

The Traditions and Legends of St. Mark's Eve

'Tis now, replied the village belle,
St. Mark's mysterious eve,
And all that old traditions tell
I tremblingly believe;

How, when the midnight signal tolls,
Along the churchyard green,
A mournful train of sentenced souls
In winding-sheets are seen.
The ghosts of all whom death shall doom
Within the coming year,
In pale procession walk the gloom,

Amid the silence drear.'

In the northern parts of England, it is still believed that if a person, on the eve of St. Mark's day, watch in the church porch from eleven at night till one in the morning, he will see the apparitions of all those who are to be buried in the churchyard during the ensuing year. The following illustration of this superstition is found among the Hollis manuscripts, in the Lansdowne Collection. The writer, Gervase Hollis, of Great Grimsby, in Lincolnshire, was a colonel in the service of Charles the First, and by no means one who could be termed a superstitious man, even in his own day. He professes to have received the tale from Mr. Liveman Rampaine, minister of God's word at Great Grimsby, in Lincolnshire, who was household chaplain to Sir Thomas Munson, of Burton, in Lincoln, at the time of the incident.

'In the year 1631, two men (inhabitants of Burton) agreed betwixt themselves upon St. Mark's eve at night to watch in the churchyard at Burton, to try whether or no (according to the ordinary belief amongst the common people) they should see the Spectra, or Phantasma of those persons which should die in that parish the year following. To this intent, having first performed the usual ceremonies and superstitions, late in the night, the moon shining then very bright, they repaired to the church porch, and there seated themselves, continuing there till near twelve of the clock. About which time (growing weary with expectation and partly with fear) they resolved to depart, but were held fast by a kind of insensible violence, not being able to move a foot.

About midnight, upon a sudden (as if the moon had been eclipsed), they were environed with a black darkness; immediately after, a kind of light, as if it had been a resultancy from torches. Then appears, coming towards the church porch, the minister of the place, with a book in his hand, and after him one in a winding-sheet, whom they both knew to resemble one of their neighbours. The church doors immediately fly open, and through pass the apparitions, and then the doors clap to again. Then they seem to hear a muttering, as if it were the burial service, with a rattling of bones and noise of earth, as in the filling up of a grave. Suddenly a still silence, and immediately after the apparition of the curate again, with another of their neighbours following in a winding-sheet, and so a third, fourth, and fifth, every one attended with the same circumstances as the first.

These all having passed away, there ensued a serenity of the sky, the moon shining bright, as at the first; they themselves being restored to their former liberty to walk away, which they did sufficiently affrighted. The next day they kept within doors, and met not together, being both of them exceedingly ill, by reason of the affrightment which had terrified them the night before. Then they conferred their notes, and both of them could very well remember the circumstances of every passage. Three of the apparitions they well knew to resemble three of their neighbours; but the fourth (which seemed an infant), and the fifth (like an old man), they could not conceive any resemblance of. After this they confidently reported to every one what they had done and seen; and in order designed to death those three of their neighbours, which came to pass accordingly.

Shortly after their deaths, a woman in the town was delivered of a child, which died likewise. So that now there wanted but one (the old man), to accomplish their predictions, which likewise came to pass after this manner. In that winter, about mid-January, began a sharp

and long frost, during the continuance of which some of Sir John Munson's friends in Cheshire, having some occasion of intercourse with him, despatched away a foot messenger (an ancient man), with letters to him. This man, trampling this bitter weather over the mountains in Derbyshire, was nearly perished with cold, yet at last he arrived at Burton with his letters, where within a day or two he died. And these men, as soon as ever they see him, said peremptorily that he was the man whose apparition they see, and that doubtless he would die before he returned, which accordingly he did.'



It may readily be presumed that this would prove a very pernicious superstition, as a malignant person, bearing an ill-will to any neighbour, had only to say or insinuate that he had seen him forming part of the visionary procession of St. Mark's Eve, in order to visit him with a serious affliction, if not with mortal disease. Of a similar tendency was a custom indulged in among cottage families on St. Mark's Eve, of riddling out all the ashes on the hearth-stone over night, in the expectation of seeing impressed upon them, in the morning, the footstep of any one of the party who was to die during the ensuing

year. In circles much given to superstition, great misery was sometimes created by a malicious or wanton person coming slyly into the kitchen during the night, and marking the ashes with the shoe of one of the party.

St. Mark's Eve appears to have enjoyed among our simple ancestors a large share of the privileges which they assigned to All Saints' Eve (the Scottish Halloween.) In Poor Robin's Almanack for 1770, occurs this stanza:

Until lately, St. Mark's Day was marked at Alnwick by a ridiculous custom, in connection with the admission of freemen of the common, and described as follows: 'The persons who are to receive this privilege march on horseback, in great ceremony, dressed in white, with their swords by their sides, to the common, headed by the Duke of Northumberland's chamberlains and bailiff. Arrived at the Freemen's Well, a large dirty pool on the border of the common, they all deliberately walk into and through it, coming out on the other side begrimed with mud, and dripping all over.

On St. Mark's eve, at twelve o'clock,
The fair maid will watch her smock,
To find her husband in the dark,

By praying unto good St. Mark.'

We presume that the practice was to hang up the smock at the fire before going to bed; the rest of the family having retired, the anxious damsel would plant herself to wait till the resemblance of him who was to be her husband should come in and turn the garment. The divination by nuts was also in vogue. A row being planted amongst the hot embers on the hearth, one from each maiden, and the name of the loved one being breathed, it was expected that if the love was in any case to be successful, the nut would jump away; if otherwise, it would go on composedly burning till all was consumed:

If you love me, pop and fly,

If not, lie there silently.'

Then hastily changing their clothes, and having comforted themselves with a dram, they make a round of the common, return into the town, where a ceremonial reception by fantastically dressed women awaits them, and end by calling at each other's houses, and imbibing more liquor. It is alleged that this singular procedure has reference to a visit which King John paid to Alnwick. Having been "laired" in this pool, he punished the inhabitants for their bad roads by imposing upon them, in the charter of their common, an obligation each to subject himself, on his entry, to the same filthy ablution.' Alnwick common lands being now enclosed, this absurd custom is abolished. The last time the freemen passed through the well was April 25, 1854.

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Conspiracist Alex Jones says Beyoncé's 'Lemonade' is CIA plot

CHRISTOPHER BRENNAN

nydailynews.com

BY Christopher Brennan

NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

Updated: Tuesday, April 26, 2016, 3:36 AM



HBO GO

Conspiracy theorist Alex Jones said that Beyoncé's newly-released "Lemonade" was CIA propaganda designed to cause a civil war.

Many Internet users found their weekend sweetened by Beyoncé's "Lemonade," though a right-wing conspiracy theorist says they are just drinking the Kool-Aid.

Info Wars founder Alex Jones leaped on the surge of attention around the superstar's latest video and unleashed his own clip, which includes a theory that Bey's release is part of a CIA plot to start a civil war.

Jones opened his video by saying he had an "over the top, important report," correctly identifying only one attribute of the following 20 minutes.

The Donald Trump-supporting, Sandy Hook truther then turned his attention to one of the most compelling parts of "Lemonade," where Beyoncé walks along a street, smashing cars with a baseball bat while singing about the man who betrayed her.

Info Wars said that the singer was invoking "urban terrorism" with the act, with Jones adding that it was engineered "so young people go out and act like maniacs and try to start a race war in this country."

Jones' site said that a scene from "Lemonade" was invoking "urban terrorism" by showing the pop star smashing up cars.

The talk radio host said that video followed in the path of Beyoncé's "Formation," released in February, as well as her Super Bowl halftime show that "purposely portrayed police in a negative light."

However, Jones said that law enforcement was also part of the nebulous propaganda conspiracy because they are funded by the same government elites bankrolling the award-winning singer.



Facebook

The exact motives behind the alleged CIA-Beyoncé-FOX-Viacom syndicate starting a civil war were not explicitly articulated by the host, though he also blamed the corporations for making father figures look fat on sitcoms.

cbrennan@nydailynews.com

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Lenin Lab: the team keeping the first Soviet leader embalmed

Daria Litvinova for The Moscow Times, part of the New East network
Monday 9 May 2016

theguardian.com

As the Kremlin releases preservation costs for the first time, The Moscow Times looks back on this unlikely 90-year experiment



He lies in a glass sarcophagus, his reddish moustache trimmed and his hands resting on his thighs. Dressed in an austere black suit, Vladimir Lenin, the first Soviet leader, looks at first to be a waxwork.

Yet this is in fact the preserved body of a man who died 92 years ago. If carefully monitored and re-embalmed regularly, scientists believe he can last in this state for centuries more.

But it might get expensive. Last month, the Federal Guard Service – which looks after all grounds near the Kremlin, including the mausoleum Lenin is kept in – announced for the first time that the costs for the “medical and biological works to maintain Lenin’s body” would amount to 13 million roubles (\$197,000) in 2016.

It's thought to cost the Russian state 13 million roubles per year to maintain Lenin's body. Photograph: Sergei Karpukhin/AP
Russians lay flowers at Lenin's mausoleum in Moscow's Red Square. Photograph: TASS / Barcroft Media
Alexei Yurchak
Lenin addressing a crowd of people at a rally in Moscow, 1917. Photograph: Popperfoto

The first idea didn't involve embalming, but deep freezing

When Lenin died in January 1924, no one planned to preserve his body for quite this long. In fact, the renowned pathologist, Alexei Abrikosov, who performed the autopsy on the body, cut its major arteries. “Later he would say that if he had known they would embalm the body, he wouldn't have done it,” says Alexei Yurchak, professor of social anthropology at the University of California. “The blood-vascular system could have been used to deliver embalming chemicals to the tissue.”

After the autopsy, Lenin's body was temporarily embalmed to prevent it from immediately decomposing while for four days the corpse was kept in an open casket at Union House in the centre of Moscow. Crowds of 50,000 people passed through the hall where he lay, despite freezing temperatures of -7°C.

But as droves of people kept coming from all over the country, the government moved the casket to a temporary wooden mausoleum on Red Square. As it was so cold, the body was still in tact and it was only 56 days later – as warmer weather slowly edged in – that Soviet officials decided to permanently preserve the body.

The first idea didn't involve embalming at all, but deep freezing. Leonid Krasin, the international trade minister at the time, was granted permission to acquire special freezing equipment from Germany. Yet in early March 1924, when preparations were gaining momentum, two well-known chemists, Vladimir Vorobyov and Boris Zbarsky, suggested embalming him with a chemical mixture that would prevent the corpse from decomposing, drying up and changing colour and shape.

After a series of government meetings and inspections, they got the go-ahead to give it a try.

For several months, a team of scientists set about whitening his skin and calculating the correct chemical mixture. Under the pressure of reporting to Soviet officials, they worked day and night.

When the mausoleum on Red Square finally re-opened for visitors on 1 August 1924, the response was overwhelmingly positive. “Amazing! It's an absolute victory,” Zbarsky was reported as saying.

driving it away on flatbed truck.

Few things bring more outrage to the Russian TV audience than watching a chaotic, violent toppling of a Lenin statue.

• LordUpminster psygone
5d ago

"Get rid of Lenin and you get rid of Russia" seems to be the common phrase.

...And quite right too: the statues were a permanent reminder of Soviet-colonial status, and meant as such. Rather like the statues of Queen Victoria which used to dot the British Empire.

Joke remembered from Poland c. 1974:

"Daddy, is it true that Lenin loved children?"

"Perfectly true: it's just that he hated parents."

▪ fritzhansschmitt spotthelemon
5d ago

Lenin/Stalin statues in Europe = Hitler/Mussolini statues in Russia.

• rpasea
5d ago

I'm certain Trump has hired the Russians to preserve him after death. It will be HUGE and the BIGGEST news with the MOST visitors.

• PiledHigherandDeeper rpasea
5d ago

Hope it happens really soon. For the sake of those rational beings who still believe in the real USA.

• Steff Clarke
5d ago

Balmy fluid!

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Russians lay flowers at Lenin's mausoleum in Moscow's Red Square. Photograph: TASS / Barcroft Media
 Alexei Yurchak
 Lenin addressing a crowd of people at a rally in Moscow, 1917.
 Photograph: Popperfoto

The Lenin Lab

Since 1924, a group of scientists has been tasked with maintaining the body. At the peak of its activity during Soviet times, the "Lenin lab" had around 200 specialists working on the project, according to Yurchak.

Today, the group is much smaller, but the work has hardly changed. Every few days scientists visit the mausoleum to check on the body, where it is preserved under carefully calculated temperature and lighting, and every 18 months Lenin is taken to a lab beneath the dimly-lit viewing room to be re-embalmed and washed.

Though scientists have managed to preserve Lenin's skeleton, muscles, skin and other tissues, all his internal organs have been removed. His brain was taken out to be examined by the Soviet "Brain Institute" – created not long after Lenin died with the specific role of studying his "extraordinary abilities". Pieces of his brain are still preserved to this day at the Neurology Centre at the Russian Academy of Sciences.

The new management of the lab doesn't want journalists to turn their work into a joke, which they often do

The unique technique developed by Soviet scientists has also resulted in several "customers" from abroad. Besides Lenin, the lab in Moscow also embalmed, among others, Vietnamese president Ho Chi Minh, Bulgarian leader Georgi Dimitrov, and North Korean leaders Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il. Not to mention Soviet dictator Josef Stalin, whose embalmed body lay alongside Lenin's from 1953 to 1961.

All the embalming processes were carried out in complete secrecy, with scientists from the lab occasionally flying out to Vietnam or North Korea to provide maintenance. "Junior specialists – like I was at the time – weren't told any of the specifics," Vadim Milov, an embalmer who worked in the lab from 1987 to 1997, explains. "And yet I had enough information to travel to Vietnam to work on Ho Chi Minh's body."

Attempts to interview someone currently assigned to the lab were unsuccessful. After several written requests to for comment, Nikolai Sidelnikov, director of the All-Russia Institute of Aromatic and Medicinal Plants, refused to provide access on the grounds it is "subject to commercial and state secrets".

Yurchak, who has been studying Lenin's body for years and has interviewed people working at the lab, says such secrecy hasn't always been the case.

"They gave plenty of interviews in the 1990s, one Russian television channel even filmed a detailed documentary featuring the facilities under the mausoleum. But the new management of the lab doesn't want journalists to turn their work into a joke, which they often do," he said.



Post-Soviet Lenin

Lenin's lab hit hard times after the Soviet Union collapsed. In 1991 many of Russia's new democratic rulers called for the demolition of the mausoleum, and for Lenin to be buried elsewhere. This caused a big protest, recalls Yevgeny Dorovin, State Duma deputy from the Communist Party and chair of an NGO supporting preserving the mausoleum in its current state.

Russians lay flowers at Lenin's mausoleum in Moscow's Red Square. Photograph: TASS / Barcroft Media Alexei Yurchak
Lenin addressing a crowd of people at a rally in Moscow, 1917. Photograph: Popperfoto

"A lot of people went to Red Square to protest this blasphemy," Dorovin says. "Fortunately, the commandant of the Kremlin garrison eventually came out and calmed everyone down, and told them that the

mausoleum is safe."

But the government pulled the plug on the project's funding in 1991, putting the future of the mausoleum in question. The Communist Party responded by collecting donations. "We paid for everything except gas, water and electricity," Dorovin explains, though he refused to specify how much money the foundation raised and spent. The state only began funding the mausoleum again a couple years ago, he adds.

But the bigger threat to the future of the mausoleum is generational. The scientists are getting older, and there are no young researchers willing to replace them. "Young people are not that interested in mausoleum science, it's not prestigious anymore," Yurchak says.

There is one obvious solution, but the idea of burying the Soviet icon is not a popular one. If that were to happen, it would mean an unparalleled 92-year-long experiment will have come to an end. "It would represent a loss of science, studies and discoveries – that is what scientists fear," says Yurchak.

In the meantime, the mausoleum is closed – but only temporarily. Authorities are preparing Red Square for today's Victory Day Parade, and the mausoleum will open again on 18 May, with Lenin looking as sprightly as ever.

A version of this article first appeared on The Moscow Times

comments (339)

• Thunderpants

5d ago

Incinerate the old geezer and be done with it.

▪ Foxydreams Thunderpants

5d ago

He made Revolution. What you did? Talking crap?

▪ valdez Foxydreams

5d ago

Do you not think that preserving his body for 90 years, with all the expense involved, is rather the antithesis of what the Russian revolution was supposedly about?

▪ Halo572 valdez

5d ago

Maybe some of them had links to the embalming industry - and as always happens - subverted it to their own money making agenda.

Nice little earner for nearly a century.

• Schtroumpf

5d ago

The hallmark of dictatorship is really having your cadaver preserved.

▫ outofit Schtroumpf

5d ago

Yeah, that's really the hallmark! Remind me, where's Hitler's?

▫ LordUpminster outofit

5d ago

I think what he meant was, the hallmark of a *successful* dictatorship. If Hitler had got away with it then I imagine that he would have been stuffed *post mortem* and would now be on display in a glass case in a vast concrete mausoleum in Nuremburg or somewhere like that.

Of the fascist dictators, Franco was the only one to die in his bed and be given a state funeral. But the upkeep of his mausoleum in the Valley of the Fallen outside Madrid is now proving so expensive, and the monument itself so generally unloved, that there have been proposals to dig him up and re-bury him in the family plot in his native town of El Ferrol.

▫ Schtroumpf outofit

5d ago

If the cadaver is still there, so probably is the dictatorship. If the body has gone, so probably has the spirit.

• SHappens

5d ago

The Russian *Toutankhamon*.

▫ Luminaire SHappens

5d ago

An apt comparison given the level of human suffering they both exploited to build their respective legacies.

Except no-one is still espousing the Egyptian as a heroic superhuman who was an inspiration and rubbish like that...

• OneAnotherName

5d ago

Preservation is easy - but Cameron walks and even appears to talk.

▫ Luminaire OneAnotherName

5d ago

The Spitting Image team refined their art and he is the result.

• atuocool

5d ago

Next Labour leader?

▫ EliminatetheNegative atuocool

5d ago

To be fair, even though dead for 92 years, Lenin has better political skills and charisma than

the High Sparrow Corbyn.

▫ Luminaire EliminatetheNegative
5d ago

Ken Livingstone could take some lessons on keeping his mouth shut from him.

• AnarchyGrrrl



▫ atuocool AnarchyGrrrl
5d ago

I couldn't agree more.

▫ MilanRenaud AnarchyGrrrl
5d ago

Not entirely sure that I agree with you. But on the other hand, I believe you raise some valid points.

▫ EliminatetheNegative AnarchyGrrrl
5d ago

Looks like the other side of a swastika.

• valdez

5d ago

There's something very undignified about having your corpse permanently on display for nearly a century. I wonder what the man himself would have thought of it?

▫ LordUpminster valdez
5d ago

Lenin's own wish on his deathbed was for a private funeral, and to be buried near his mother Maria Alexandrovna Ulyanova (died 1916) in the Literatorskie Mostki cemetery in St. Petersburg. But unfortunately the long-standing Russian-Orthodox tradition of venerating relics of the saints took precedence over his wishes, so he remains on display to this day like some fairground exhibit.

Stalin at least escaped that fate. In the early 1990s, under Yeltsin's chaotic and bibulous rule, a joke went the rounds in Moscow that things had reached such a pass that a delegation from the Duma went to the Kremlin cemetery and stood in front of the great black granite slab.

"Josef Vissarionovich, as one of Russia's greatest leaders, will you return to guide us again in our hour of trouble?"

Silence.

"Josef Vissarionovich, as a Russian patriot, who led us to victory in the war against Hitler, your country has never stood in greater need of you than it does now. Will you come back to lead us?"

Silence. So one last try.

"Josef Vissarionovich, as a true son of Mother Russia, will you remain deaf to her pleas?"

A sort of scuffling noise is heard from under the slab, then a voice.

"Oh all right then, if you insist. But this time, *no more Mister Nice-Guy!*"

▪ valdez LordUpminster

5d ago

Thanks for that, one of the rare gems that makes CIF worthwhile.

▪ hfakos LordUpminster

5d ago

I think you will find that venerating relics of the saints is just as long-standing a tradition in Catholicism. No need to single out Russian orthodoxy. I have seen many a skull, bones, what not in Catholic churches and cathedrals all over Europe. My homeland, Hungary, has the tradition of taking the Holy Right Hand of St. Stephens out for a "walk" in Budapest on the 20th of August. Rather creepy if you ask me.

▪ Bobtoo

5d ago

They should give him a dignified burial, but I think he's become a morbid tourist attraction these days. He's been pumped so full of preservatives for so long he doesn't real, more like an abandoned 1920's shop window dummy when I shuffled past a few years ago.

▪ essientric Bobtoo

5d ago

Looked pretty real to me.

▪ Halo572 Bobtoo

5d ago

? So you went to see the morbid tourist attraction and now think it should be shut down?

▪ spotthelemon Halo572

5d ago

it has a strange compulsion, even for many people who don't approve

▪ NucMed

5d ago

I've a small depleted uranium CCCP-era statue of him I'm willing to let them have for a small consideration (US\$, € or preferably CHF only) if they need a replacement.

Slap some paint on, dim the lights, no one could tell the difference ...

▪ YeOldeSoothsayer

5d ago

Comrade Putin is just waiting for when there's the technology to reanimate him.

▪ beebeeguy64

5d ago

They should rent him out for Halloween parties. It would pay for the upkeep. I'm an ideas man.

▪ EliminatetheNegative beebeguy64
5d ago

And for left-wing necrophilia parties?

▪ Craig Buchanan EliminatetheNegative
5d ago

how do you get an invite?

▪ PrivitEye EliminatetheNegative
5d ago

left-wing necrophilia parties

Sounds like a dead bore....

▪ ChoccaMocha
5d ago

Utterly revolting as well as bonkers.

▪ majamer
5d ago

He looks as if someone replaced the body with a wax replica and is cashing in those millions. Had they kept his vascular system they could have kept him in a vegetative state using a ventricular assist device. But it was more kosher then to strip off the veins and arteries. Hope they will do a better job with Vladimir the Second!

▪ sasha19 majamer
5d ago

You only need to stand in line and file past in 30 seconds. The lines are long, get there early and note all the wedding parties having their photos taken outside the mausoleum.

▪ norfolk1810 majamer
5d ago

There were no "ventricular assist" devices in 1924.

▪ Toeparty
5d ago

The person most revolted by this whole thing if he was alive would be Lenin himself who absolutely abhorred personality cults and hero worship. He was appropriated by the Stalinists after his death to put a radical gloss on their reactionary rule but he would have been one of the first in their dungeons with a bullet in the back of his head had he lived to fight their rise.

▪ SimonGhent
5d ago

It would represent a loss of science, studies and discoveries

Losing knowledge on how to preserve bodies long term is one scientific loss I won't lose that much

sleep over.

▪ psygone
5d ago

Leninism, which include his many statues across Russia and his memory comprise of an important socialist political and economic ideology.

Functionally, the Leninist in 1917 provided the working class with the political consciousness ("education and organisation") and revolutionary leadership necessary to depose of capitalism in Imperial Russia.

Later in Russian socialist society, government by "direct democracy" is controlled by elected soviets (workers' councils) in which the "soviet government" Lenin described as the manifestation of the Marxist 'democratic dictatorship of the proletariat'.

It is for that reason that in today's Russia society - Lenin is simply too precious, treasured and cherished as to bury him. He and his ideas must be preserved for all eternity.

Next year will be the one hundred year anniversary of the 1917 revolution where millions of Russian soldiers and naval sailors withdrew from WWI against the German / Austria-Hungarian / Ottoman alliance and, the beginning of the Russian Civil War. With Lenin's preserved remains and memory - one can expect the parades and festivities to be quite significant.

• Trixr psygone
5d ago

The Leninists were far from the only people "providing" the working classes (and others) with political consciousness, including in Russia in the early 20th century. Learn some history.

• FriendlyEmpiricist Trixr
5d ago

Psygone never said they were. Perhaps you should learn about the straw-man fallacy.

• gilday
5d ago

I never realised he was ginger

▪ Bloreheath
5d ago

i wonder why Stalin didn't benefit from the same treatment. No expense will be spared to maintain Lenin's cadaver — which testifies to something innately Russian that Western countries fail to grasp. Millions of Russians perished in the Revolution of 1917 and during several decades after — but nothing will deter their descendants from worshipping that disagreeable (and needless) event and its frightful exponents. It, and its long aftermath, made the Russians a people to be feared. They like that. Putin inspires the same fear, and consequently enjoys huge support.

• sasha19 Bloreheath
5d ago

Read Khrushchev' Secret Speech and note the crimes of Stalin. It was decided that Stalin needed to be buried

▪ spotthelemon Bloreheath
5d ago

Stalins body was preserved in the same way for 8 years till Khrushchev started a de-Stalinisation programme.

There were of course two Revolutions, the February revolution which toppled the Tsar and the October Bolshevik revolution, neither was particularly bloody in itself, 18 people arrested and two killed in the latter. The Civil war that followed , unsurprisingly, killed quite large numbers. Lenin was far from being a saint but his actions pale into insignificance compared to Stalin & his rule. Arguing that people should be kept in virtual slavery for fear a homicidal dictator will take over is somewhat perverse

▪ AaronClausen spotthelemon
5d ago

It must be noted that Lenin's effective rule was around six years, whereas Stalin's was nearly thirty years.

▪ Ramakant Yadav
5d ago

Will they bury him after they run out of money? That will be ironic.

▪ ID9159063
5d ago

Lenin's wife and sister hated the idea of embalming his body and they never visited the mausoleum. Stalin didn't care.

▪ jdanforth ID9159063
5d ago

Trotsky objected to the mausoleum as well, said it was an expression of Stalin's program to destroy the Revolution. I wish I could remember where he wrote that.

▪ spotthelemon
5d ago

There were rumours quite a few years back that the body was in a bad way. This is denied by the authorities

Some polls suggest most Russians think he should be buried

▪ psygone spotthelemon
5d ago

Some polls

I'm not so sure -- in 1990's when the last Soviet troops left the region, Eastern European countries toppled hundreds of Lenin statues. "Get rid of Lenin and you get rid of Russia" seems to be the common phrase.

Given that Russians remains very sensitive to Lenin's memory and their religious respect to the mausoleum, many in the West urged 'gentle' removals perhaps using a crane and

Ohio police tricked into thinking Limp Bizkit was playing at a gas station

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Limp Bizkit Sunoco

by Richard Howard

April 20, 2016

Surprise! Limp Bizkit's concert at a Sunoco was a hoax.

You know how gullible you can be when you're super high? (I mean, that's what I've heard, anyway). Well, it looks like some

enterprising Internet troll decided to take advantage of that, to great comedic effect.

In yesterday's lead up to the weed-smoking bonanza that is 4/20, rumours began circulating online that nu-metal titans Limp Bizkit would be playing at a gas station in Dayton, Ohio today (the Sunoco at Keowee Street and Wayne Avenue, to be precise).

The greatest photo I have ever seen pic.twitter.com/PiFysay237

— Patrick Wall (@ByPatrickWall) April 20, 2016

To be fair, the idea of Fred Durst pulling a publicity stunt like that and making lots of shitty puns about the crowd needing to get "gassed up" before launching into "Break Stuff" isn't totally implausible. Still, to the dismay of the Dayton Limp Bizkit Fan Club, the whole thing was quickly revealed to be a hoax.

Hilariously, the first organization to dispel the rumours was the Dayton Police Department, who, fearing a yankee hat wearing meathead-fueled riot of "Nookie" music video proportions, tweeted this Snopes.com-worthy image.

BE AWARE: There is NO Limp Bizkit concert Wed. 4/20 at Sunoco station at Keowee St. & Wayne Ave. These ads FALSE. pic.twitter.com/wMo7bYxa9p

— Dayton Police Dept. (@DaytonPolice) April 19, 2016

And for those hoping this was just Babylon trying to keep the youth/middle aged down, Papa Bizkit himself went on record as well:

@jend2987 NOT TRUE

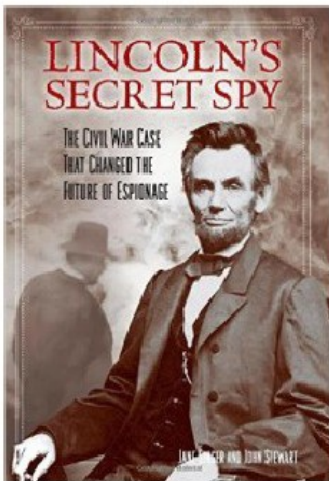
— Fred Durst (@freddurst) April 19, 2016

Oh well. Heartbroken Buckeyes, if you need your Bizkit fix you can cross the border and hit up Quebec's Amnesia Rockfest where you'll also be treated to the pseudo-rap bonus of Insane Clown Posse!

Of course, if you *really* need that gas station experience and accompanying hot dog flavoured water jokes, just trek over to Pittsburgh where Limp is purported to be playing a 24 hour set at the Butler Street Getgo. God I love you, internet.

- AUX.TV is part of the AUX Music Network

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Lincoln's Secret Spy

August 24, 2015 – “What is worse? A confederate con man claiming he was Lincoln’s spy throughout the Civil War, or the Union veteran who pursued his claim all the way to the Supreme Court?” That’s the central question of Jane Singer’s book, *Lincoln’s Secret Spy: The Civil War Case that Changed the Future of Espionage*. In it, she introduces us to William Alvin Lloyd. Con man, bigamist, charlatan, Lloyd hobbled out of the defeated Confederacy and into the capital of the newly re-United States with a claim that made people listen: The government owed him money for serving as Abraham Lincoln’s covert operative.

John Wilkes Booth had shot down the Great Emancipator just a month earlier in April 1865, and couldn’t refute the story. So, armed with Lincoln’s signature on a travel pass and a skill for duping people — including no less than Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, who was at the president’s side when he died — Lloyd teamed up with lawyer Enoch Totten, who’d served in the Union Army during the conflict.

The story of their conspiracy to defraud the American people is brought to us by my guest, Jane Singer, and her co-author, John Stewart. Jane is a Civil War scholar and author of *The Confederate Dirty War: Arson, Bombings, Assassination and Plots for Chemical and Germ Attacks on the Union*

, the basis of the History Channel special, *Civil War Terror*. You can follow her at [Facebook.com/JaneSingerAuthor](https://www.facebook.com/JaneSingerAuthor) or @JaneBSinger1 on Twitter. Her book is more than a tale of a long-ago fraud. The Supreme Court’s ruling in *Totten v. United States* is a legal precedent that affects our clandestine operatives to this day. Here’s my conversation with Jane about this intricate tale of espionage and lies.

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Wiltshire's 'Neolithic' long barrow burial chamber opens - BBC News

bbc.com



• 20 September 2014
• From the section Wiltshire



The All Cannings long barrow

Would you fancy spending eternity inside a burial chamber in the corner of a field in Wiltshire?

The first "Neolithic" long barrow to be built in the UK for 5,500 years has been completed and already the first urn of human ashes has been

placed inside.

The structure at All Cannings near Devizes, took almost nine months to build, using traditional materials and stone working techniques.



Inside the All Cannings long barrow

It was privately financed and cost about £200,000 to build, can hold about 1,000 urns and has now opened officially.

The first paying client, Adrian Gray, who interred his wife Carol's ashes in a pewter urn behind a sealing stone in one of the barrow's niches, said it was "amazing".

"I'm so pleased we were able to do this. It's an incredible honour for us to have the first niche, in the first long barrow, for five-and-

a-half thousand years.

What is a long barrow?

- Barrows are artificial hills of earth and stones built over the remains of the dead
- They were usually reserved for members of the social elite or Anglo-Saxon royalty
- Ordinary people were usually cremated or buried in more humble graves
- They were first constructed in about 4,000 BC up to the late pre-Christian era
- England's most famous barrow is at Sutton Hoo in Suffolk

"It's a magnificent chamber. I think my wife would have been very pleased with what we've done."



Inside the All Cannings long barrow

Mr Gray said the particular niche selected was chosen by a butterfly.

"After my wife passed away I kept seeing butterflies flying into the house and in the wardrobes and on the day we came [to choose the niche] there was a butterfly in this chamber flitting about.

"It flitted towards this niche rather than the other ones, so I chose it on that basis. It's all a bit mad."

Developer Tim Daw said he was

"absolutely thrilled" with the way the structure had turned out.

"It's been a lot of work - all hand work. Every stone has been shaped and placed by hand.

"It's not a pastiche or a reconstruction of an ancient long barrow - it's been made more usable but keeping a traditional feel to it."



Inside the All Cannings long barrow

The long barrow contains four large chambers, each housing 55 niches, which are each able to hold four or five urns.

A smaller "secret" chamber is able to house single urns in smaller niches.

Clients are charged about £1,000 for use of a niche. More than 40 have been reserved so far.

Mr Daw said the burial chamber was planned to be much bigger but he "ran out of time and money" to complete it.

"We wanted to get it finished this summer and we've done a far fancier job than we were originally going to do," he said.

The barrow is aligned with the sunrise on the Winter Solstice on 21 December.

"The sun should shine right up the passageway and hit the end. If it doesn't we've got to move the barrow," Mr Daw joked.

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Inside the All Cannings long barrow



Inside the All Cannings long barrow

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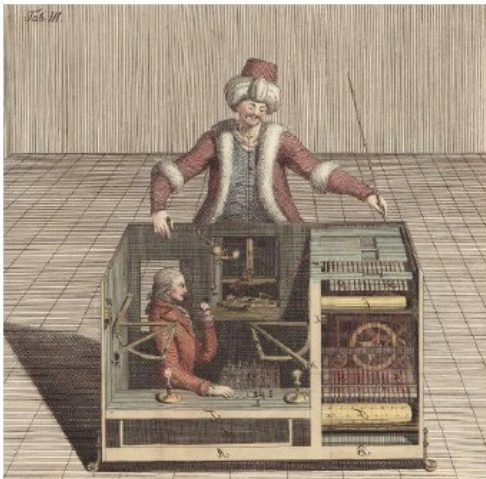
Frolicsome Engines: The Long Prehistory of Artificial Intelligence

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The PUBLIC DOMAIN REVIEW

A project of the Open Knowledge Foundation

Defecating ducks, talking busts, and mechanised Christs — Jessica Riskin on the wonderful history of automata, machines built to mimic the processes of intelligent life.



Coloured engraving from Joseph Racknitz's 1789 pamphlet which attempted to reveal the secret workings of William Kempelen's alleged chess-playing automaton "The Turk" — Source

How old are the fields of robotics and artificial intelligence? Many might trace their origins to the mid-twentieth century, and the work of people such as Alan Turing, who wrote about the possibility of machine intelligence in the '40s and '50s, or the MIT engineer Norbert Wiener, a founder of cybernetics. But these fields have prehistories — traditions of machines that imitate living and intelligent processes — stretching back centuries and, depending how you count, even millennia.

The word "robot" made its first appearance in a 1920 play by the Czech writer Karel Čapek entitled *R.U.R.*, for Rossum's Universal Robots. Deriving his neologism from the Czech word "robota," meaning "drudgery" or "servitude," Čapek used "robot" to refer to a race of artificial humans who replace human workers in a futurist dystopia. (In fact, the artificial humans in the play are more like clones than what we would consider robots, grown in vats rather than built from parts.)

There was, however, an earlier word for artificial humans and animals, "automaton", stemming from Greek roots meaning "self-moving". This etymology was in keeping with Aristotle's definition of living beings as those things that could move themselves at will. Self-moving machines were inanimate objects that seemed to borrow the defining feature of living creatures: self-motion. The first-century-AD engineer Hero of Alexandria described lots of automata. Many involved elaborate networks of siphons that activated various actions as the water passed through them, especially figures of birds drinking, fluttering, and chirping.

The siphon would have had a particular attraction to the ancient automaton-maker, in that it makes water travel upward, counter to what it would otherwise do. According to Aristotle, while living things moved themselves at will, inanimate things moved according to their natures: heavy things, made of earth or water, descended, while light things, made of air or fire, ascended. A siphon, by allowing water to ascend, appeared to violate Aristotle's principle, and it also tends to work intermittently, and so further creating the illusion of wilful

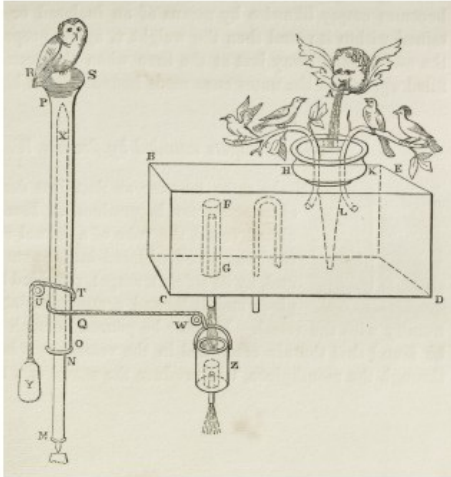


Illustration from an 1851 English edition of Hero's *Pneumatics*, in which he describes machines working on air, steam or water pressure — Source .

behavior.

Waterworks, including but not limited to ones using siphons, were probably the most important category of automata in antiquity and the middle ages. Flowing water conveyed motion to a figure or set of figures by means of levers or pulleys or tripping mechanisms of various sorts. A late twelfth-century example by an Arabic automaton-maker named Al-Jazari is a peacock fountain for hand-washing, in which flowing water triggers little figures to offer the washer first a dish of perfumed soap powder, then a hand towel.



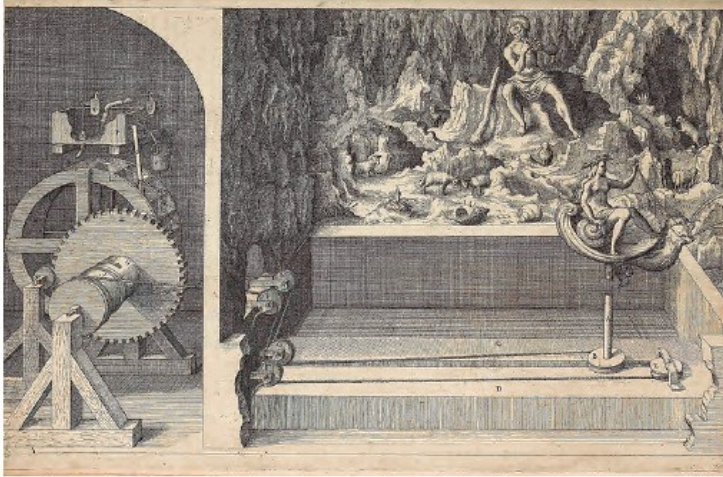
Illustration of the peacock fountain, from a 14th-century edition of Al-Jazari's *Book of Knowledge of Ingenious Mechanical Devices* — Source .

Such hydraulic automata became ubiquitous on the grounds of palaces and wealthy estates. So-called “frolicsome engines” were to be found as early as the late thirteenth century at the French chateau of Hesdin, the account books of which mention mechanical monkeys, “an elephant and a he-goat”.¹ Over the next two centuries, the chateau collection expanded to include: “3 personages that spout water and wet people at will”; a “machine for wetting ladies when they step on it”; an

“engien [sic] which, when its knobs are touched, strikes in the face those who are underneath and covers them with black or white [flour or coal dust]”; a “window where, when people wish to open it, a personage in front of it wets people and closes the window again in spite of them”; a “lectern on which there is a book of ballades, and, when they try to read it, people are all covered with black, and, as soon as they look inside, they are all wet with water”; a “mirror where people are sent to look at themselves when they are besmirched, and, when they look into it, they are once more all covered with flour, and all whitened”, and so on, and so on.²

By the time the French essayist and diarist Michel de Montaigne went traveling through Europe in 1580-81, hydraulic automata had grown so commonplace that he grew bored, though he continued dutifully to record them in his travel diary. At one palace, for example, he saw sprays of water from “brass jets” activated by springs. “While the ladies are busy watching the fish play, you have only to release some spring: immediately all these jets spurt out thin, hard streams of water to the height of a man’s head, and fill the petticoats and thighs of the ladies with this coolness”.³

Twenty years later, the French King Henri IV hired the Italian engineer Tomaso Francini to build him some waterworks for the royal palace at Saint Germain en Laye. Francini built hydraulic grottoes devoted to the Greek pantheon and their adventures: Mercury played a trumpet and Orpheus his lyre; Perseus freed Andromeda from her dragon. There were automaton blacksmiths, weavers, millers, carpenters, knife-grinders, fishermen and farriers conducting the obligatory watery attacks on spectators.



*Not actually one of Francini's grottoes but rather a depiction of a similar creation designed by a contemporary French hydraulic engineer Salomon de Caus, published in his 1615 work *Les raisons des forces mouvantes* — Source .*

Even more than in royal gardens and on noble estates, medieval and early Renaissance automata appeared in churches and cathedrals. Automaton Christs — muttering, blinking, grimacing on the Cross — were especially popular. A mechanical Christ on a crucifix, known as the Rood of Grace, attracted pilgrims to Boxley Abbey in Kent during the fifteenth century. This Jesus “was made to move the eyes and lips by stringes of haire”. The Rood could move its hands and feet, nod its head, roll its eyes, and show “a well contented or displeased minde: byting the lippe, and

gathering a frowning, forward, and disdainful face, when it would pretend offence: and shewing a most milde, amiable, and smyling cheere and countenance, when it would seeme to be well pleased”.⁴

Mechanical devils were also to be found. Poised in sacristies, they made horrible faces, howled and stuck out their tongues. The Satan-machines rolled their eyes and flailed their arms and wings; some even had moveable horns and crowns.

The Florentine architect Filippo Brunelleschi even mechanized Paradise itself: “a Heaven full of living and moving figures could be seen as well as countless lights, flashing on and off like lightning”.⁵ While elsewhere, elaborately engineered hells rumbled with thunder and flashed with lightning, spewing forth writhing automaton serpents and dragons.

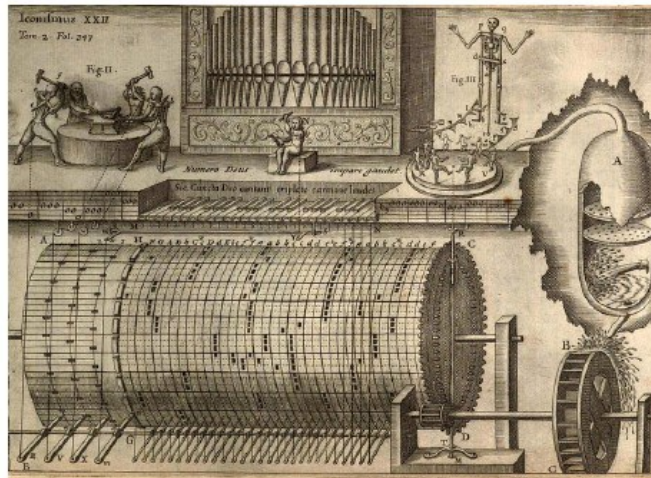
These machines helped inspire the idea that perhaps automata accomplished something deeper than merely entertaining tricks: perhaps they genuinely modeled the workings of nature. The French philosopher René Descartes made this case powerfully during the 1640s, arguing that the entire world, including living bodies, was essentially machinery composed of moving parts and could be understood in just the way a clockmaker understands a clock. His work was foundational to modern science in general, and to modern physiology in particular. In developing his mechanist model of science, Descartes invoked the lifelike machines all around him. Indeed, he lived for a time in Saint Germain en Laye and almost certainly visited the hydraulic grottoes of Henri IV, which he described in detail.



A mechanised creature, half-human half-serpent, from Johannes de Fontana's 15th-century manuscript *Belli Corum instrumentorum liber cum figuris* — Source .

With the sixteenth-century advent of the pinned cylinder — a barrel with pins or bars sticking out, such as in a music box — even more complex lifelike machines were possible. Around this time, a new word also arose to describe human-like machines in particular: “android,” derived from Greek roots meaning “manlike.” This was the coinage of Gabriel Naudé, French physician and librarian, and personal doctor to none other than the automaton-loving Louis XIII.⁶

Pinned cylinders were the programming devices in automata and automatic organs from around 1600. In 1650, the German polymath Athanasius Kircher offered an early design of a hydraulic organ with automata, governed by a pinned cylinder and including a dancing skeleton.



Kircher's fanciful design for a hydraulic organ, complete with dancing skeleton, featured in his *Musurgia Universalis* (1650) — Source .

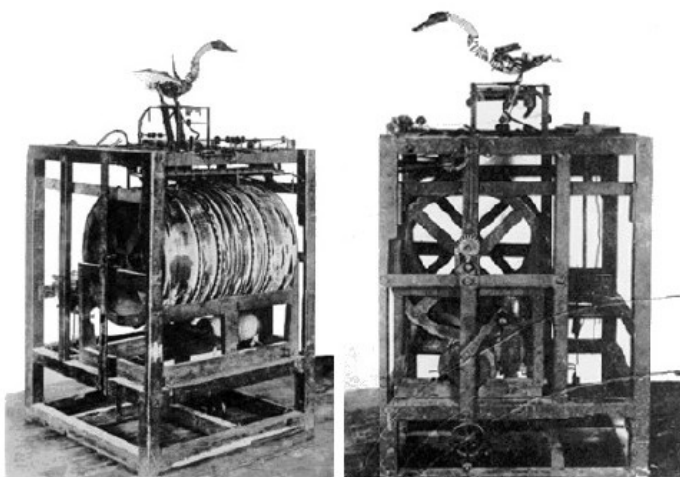
Of course, it's an anachronism to call sixteenth- and seventeenth-century pinned cylinders “programming” devices. To be sure, there is a continuous line of development from these pinned cylinders to the punch cards used in nineteenth-

century automatic looms (which automated the weaving of patterned fabrics), to the punch cards used in early computers, to a silicon chip. The designers of the automatic loom used automata and automatic musical instruments as their model; then Charles Babbage — the English mathematician who designed the first mechanical computers during the 1830s, the Analytical and Difference Engines — in turn used the automatic loom as his model. Indeed, one might consider a pinned cylinder to be a sequence of pins and spaces, just as a punch card is a sequence of holes and spaces, or zeroes and ones. Though it is important to remember that neither Babbage nor the designers of the automatic loom nor the automaton-makers thought of these devices in terms of programming or information, concepts which did not exist until the mid-twentieth century. For example, ideas about the division of labor inspired the Industrial-Revolution-era automatic looms as well as Babbage's calculating engines — they were machines intended primarily to separate mindless from intelligent forms of work.

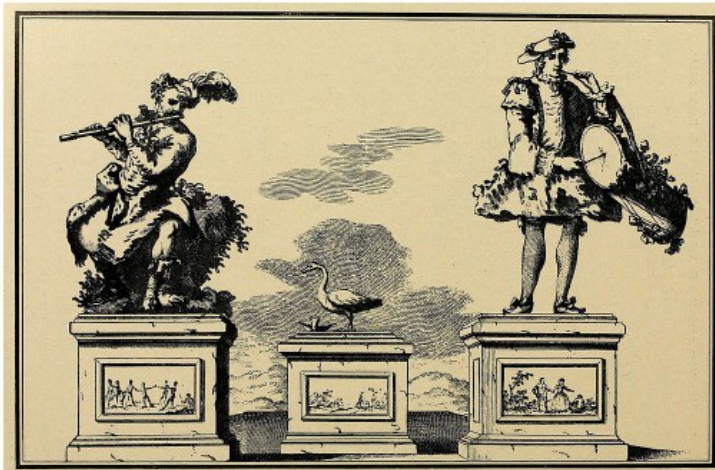
With pinned cylinders, beginning in the early part of the eighteenth century, people began to design automata that actually enacted the tasks they appeared to perform. The first

simulative automata were designed in the 1730s by a Frenchman named Jacques Vaucanson, and quickly became the talk of Europe. Two were musicians, a “Piper” and a “Flutist”. The flutist had lips that flexed in four directions, delicate jointed fingers, and lungs made of bellows that gave three different blowing pressures. It was the first automaton musician actually to play an instrument, rather than being a music box with a decorative figure. It played a real flute: you could even bring it your own.

Vaucanson’s third automaton was the notorious “Defecating Duck”. While it flapped its wings and cavorted duckishly, its main attraction was that it swallowed bits of corn or grain and excreted them at the other end in a *changed form*. (This part of the act was a fake: the corn that went in the front remained hidden for surreptitious removal, while the rear end was pre-loaded.)



Undated photographs of what is purported to be Vaucanson's duck. The images seem to fit with Goethe's description of seeing it in 1805, "without feathers ... like a skeleton" — Source .



18th-century engraving showing all three of Vaucanson's automata — the “Flutist” to the left, “Piper” to the right, and the notorious duck in the middle. Featured in Henry René d'Allemagne's *Histoire des jouets* (1902) — Source .

Although none of Vaucanson's automata survive, their cousins do. Among these are three androids designed in the 1770s by a Swiss clockmaking family named Jaquet-Droz: a lady “Musician” and two little boys, a “Writer” and a “Draughtsman”. The “Writer” can be arranged to write any message of up to forty characters; the “Draughtsman” sketches four pictures in charcoal; and the “Musician” plays several airs on a harpsichord. The trio is eerily lifelike, and still hold court in Neuchâtel, Switzerland. Their eyes follow their fingers as they work, the “Draughtsman” blows the charcoal dust from his page periodically, and the “Musician” seems to sigh with emotion as she plays (she actually breathes for an hour before and after the act, giving spectators a certain *frisson* as they arrive and depart).

Later on in the eighteenth century, engineers and automaton makers became concerned with trying to mechanize two processes deemed the epitome of living intelligence: speech and chess-playing. A flurry of talking heads in the 1770s, '80s and '90s was triggered by a prize competition

sponsored by the St Petersburg Academy of Sciences for a machine that could produce the sound of vowels. People went far beyond just vowels. A Frenchman named Mical designed a



Jaquet-Droz at the court of Louis XV with his automata (left to right): the "Writer", the "Musician", and the "Draughtsman" — a lithograph reproduced in *Scientific American*, Vol. 88, Number 16 (April 1903) — Source .

pair of talking heads in 1778.

They contained "artificial glottises arranged over taut membranes", but their dialogue in praise of Louis XVI was rather dull: "The King gives Peace to Europe", intoned the first head; "Peace crowns the King with Glory", replied the second; and so on.



Contemporary depiction of Mical's heads, reproduced in Henry René d'Allemagne's *Histoire des jouets* (1902) — Source

About a decade later, a Hungarian engineer named Wolfgang von Kempelen designed a speaking machine using an ivory glottis, bellows for lungs, a leather vocal tract with a hinged tongue, a rubber oral cavity and mouth, and a nose with two little pipes as nostrils. Its pronouncements were more whimsical than those of Mical's talking heads: "my wife is my friend", for example, and "come with me to Paris".

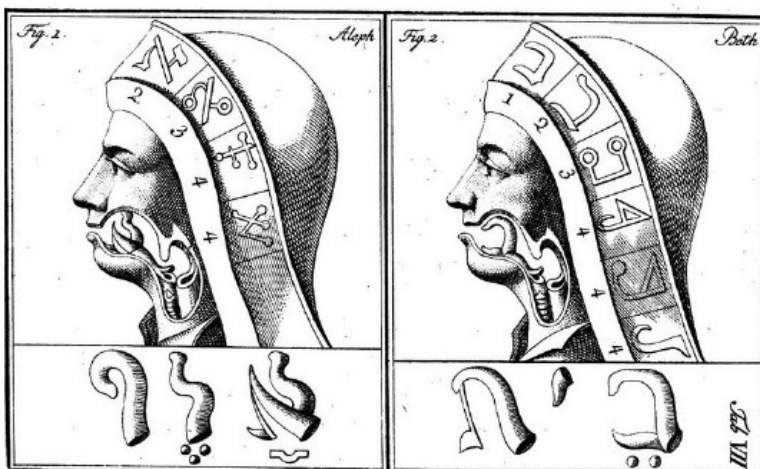
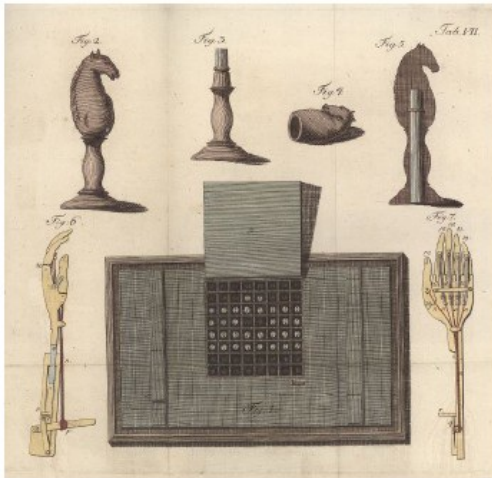


Illustration from Kempelen's *Le mécanisme de la parole* (1791) Source .

Kempelen was more famous for another "automaton" that he designed and built in 1769, the chess-playing Turk. This life-sized model was exhibited all over Europe and America by Kempelen himself and then by others until its demise in a fire in 1854; in the course of its long career, reportedly beating both Napoleon and Charles Babbage. Although aspects of its movement — the motion of the arms, head, etc. — were mechanical, it was not, of course, a

full automaton. The crucial chess-playing aspect was the work of a succession of skillful and diminutive human chess-players concealed in its pedestal, something all but admitted by Kempelen who said his main achievement had been to create an illusion. People no doubt knew it was a hoax, but they were fascinated anyway, because it dramatized the question of the age: whether a machine could reason, and relatedly, whether the human mind might itself be a kind of machine.

Edgar Allan Poe was taken by the question and in 1836 wrote an essay about Kempelen's Turk and Babbage's Difference Engine. He believed a machine could calculate, because calculation was a fixed and determinate process, but not that a machine could play chess because, he said, chess was *indeterminate*: the machine would have to respond to its opponent's moves. So Babbage's machine was genuine but Kempelen's fraudulent.



Coloured engraving from Joseph Racknitz's 1789 pamphlet which attempted to reveal the secret workings of William Kempelen's alleged chess-playing automaton "The Turk" — Source

When I've assigned Poe's essay to engineering students, they've found his reasoning strange: why couldn't a machine respond to each move of its opponent? Here is another example of how people's intuitions about the nature of life, mechanism and science continually transform. Poe assumed a machine was necessarily unresponsive. Two centuries earlier, Descartes had made the opposite assumption, and almost two centuries later, so did my students.

How should we regard Hero of Alexandria's siphon-driven birds, the medieval automaton Christs, the Renaissance frolicsome engines, the android musicians, artists, writers and talking heads of the eighteenth century? They can certainly be seen as the ancestors of modern projects in robotics and artificial intelligence. But they were also expressions of a very different mode of

understanding. Rather than the concepts of programming, feedback or information so important today, they were born from other ideas: animate versus inanimate matter, willful versus constrained motion, mindless versus intelligent labor. It is hard to imagine that our own conceptual frameworks will one day seem as remote and exotic as an Aristotelian account of Hero's siphons seems to us, but they surely will. Can knowing this perhaps help us to imagine what might come to replace information, programming and feedback as the key concepts for understanding life, sentience, mechanism and mind?

Jessica Riskin is Professor of History at Stanford University. Her teaching and scholarship concern the history of European science, ideas, culture and politics. Her new book, released last month, is *The Restless Clock: A History of the Centuries-Long Argument Over What Makes Living Thing Tick*.

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 - Library of Congress
 - The Hopkin Thomas Project
- *Automata Old and New* (1893), by Conrad William Cooke.
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- "Maelzel's Chess-player" (1836), by Edgar Allan Poe.
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 - Internet Archive

Further Reading

The Restless Clock: A History of the Centuries-Long Argument over What Makes Living Things Tick (*University Of Chicago Press, 2016*)

by Jessica Riskin

An exploration into how the automata of early modern Europe can be seen as models for the new science of living things, tracing questions of science and agency through Descartes, Leibniz, Lamarck, and Darwin, among others.

Genesis Redux: Essays in the History and Philosophy of Artificial Life (*University Of Chicago Press, 2007*)

edited by Jessica Riskin

A collection of essays examining efforts to simulate life in machinery, to synthesize life out of

material parts, and to understand living beings by comparison with inanimate mechanisms.

Leonardo's Lost Robots (*Springer, 2006*)

by Mark Rosheim

Reinterpreting Leonardo's legacy of notes, this book shows that apparently unconnected fragments from dispersed manuscripts actually comprise cohesive designs for functioning automata.

Medieval Robots: Mechanism, Magic, Nature, and Art ()

by E. R. Truitt

Discovering the forgotten history of fantastical, aspirational, and terrifying machines that captivated Europe in imagination and reality between the ninth and fourteenth centuries.

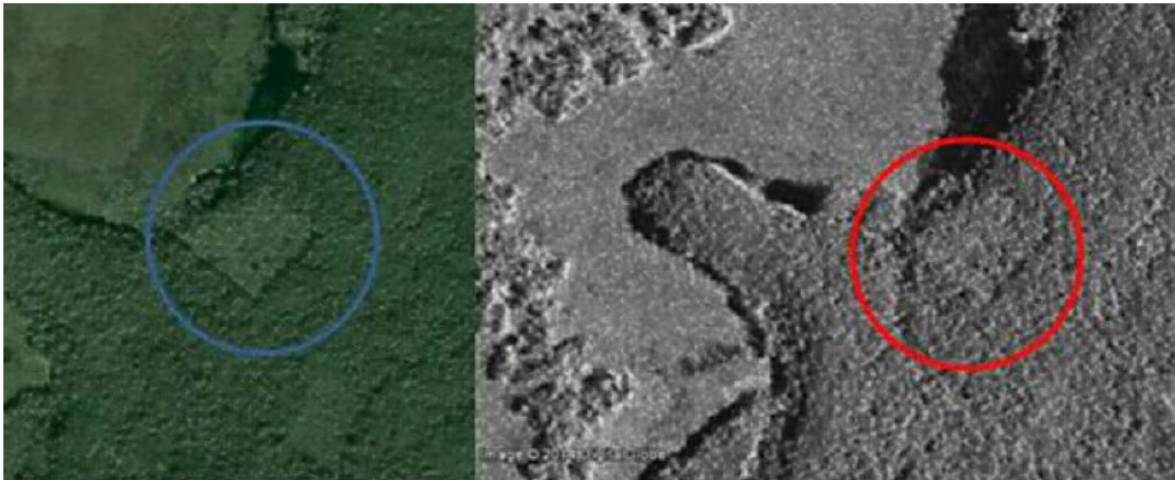
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A 15-year-old might have just discovered a lost Maya city in the Mexican jungle

sciencealert.com

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Canadian Space Agency

A 15-year-old might have just discovered a lost Maya city in the Mexican jungle

What did you do when you were 15?

BEC CREW

10 MAY 2016

William Gadoury, a 15-year-old school student from Quebec, Canada, has found something that's been hidden from archaeologists for centuries - what appears to be a lost city of the Maya civilisation, buried deep in the Yucatan jungle of southeastern Mexico.

He didn't do it by hiring a bunch of expensive equipment, hopping on a plane, and slaving away on an excavation site - he discovered the incredible ruins from the comfort of his own home, by figuring out that the ancient cities were built in alignment with the stars above.

"I did not understand why the Maya built their cities away from rivers, on marginal lands and in the mountains," Gadoury told French-Canadian magazine, *Journal de Montréal*. "They had to have another reason, and as they worshiped the stars, the idea came to me to verify my hypothesis. I was really surprised and excited when I realised that the most brilliant stars of the constellations matched the largest Maya cities."

Gadoury had been studying 22 Maya constellations for years before realising that he could line up the positions of 117 Maya cities on the ground with maps of stars and constellations above - something that no one had pieced together before.

With this in mind, he located a 23rd constellation, which included just three stars. According to his sky map, he could only link up two cities with the three stars, so suspected that a third city remained undetected in that spot.

Unfortunately, the location on the ground that matched up with the third star wasn't exactly somewhere that Gadoury could just go visit - it's right in the heart of the jungle, in the inaccessible and remote region of Mexico's southern Yucatán Peninsula.

Not that that stopped Gadoury - he knew that a fire had stripped much of the forest in the area back in 2005, which meant that from above, you might have an easier time spotting ancient ruins than if the canopy had been thriving for the past couple of thousand years.

All he needed to do was access satellite imagery of the area from the Canadian Space Agency, which he mapped onto Google Earth images to see if there were any signs of his lost city.

Further analyses from satellites belonging to NASA and the Japanese Space Agency revealed what looks like a pyramid and 30 buildings at the location mapped by the star, Yucatan Expat Life reports. "Not only has he discovered a new Maya city, but it is one of the five largest on record."



Killing. It. Credit: Canadian Space Agency

As Daniel De Lisle from the Canadian Space Agency told Samuel Osborne at *The Independent*, the satellite images revealed certain linear features on the forest floor that looked anything but natural. "There are enough items to suggest it could be a man-made structure," he said.

Gadoury has tentatively named the lost city K'ääk' Chi', meaning "fire mouth", and will be working with researchers from the Canadian Space Agency to get his

discovery published in a peer-reviewed journal. He'll also be presenting his findings at Brazil's International Science fair in 2017.

Now, we don't want to burst anyone's bubble here, but while things look incredibly promising from those satellite images, including the shapes of buildings that archaeologists were able to make out, nothing can be confirmed until experts can access the site and see the remains up close.

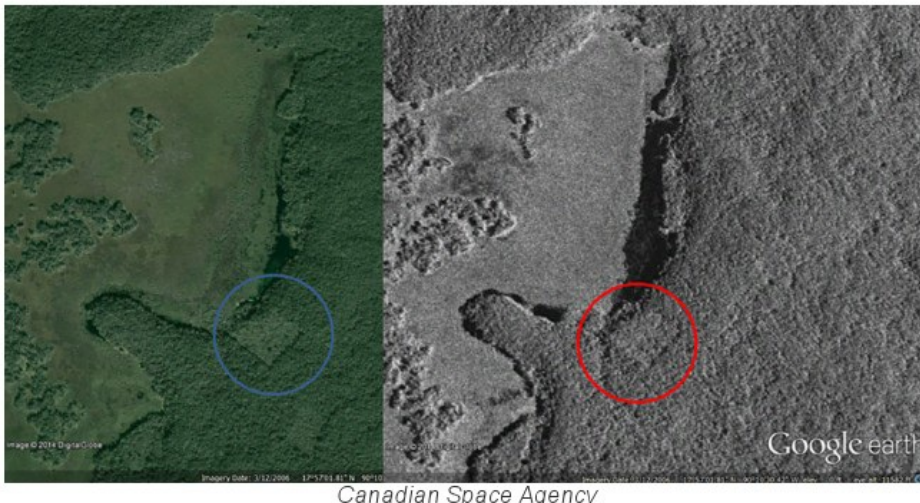
A team of archaeologists is now figuring out how to make that happen, and one of the researchers involved in the project, Armand LaRocque from the University of New Brunswick, told the *Journal de Montréal* that if they can get the funds to organise an excavation, they'll be taking Gadoury along for sure.

"It would be the culmination of my three years of work and the dream of my life," said Gadoury, and suddenly we feel incredibly inadequate that the best thing we did at 15 was hand in most of our assignments on time.

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That Long-Lost Mayan City a Teen Found Isn't Lost ... or a City

wired.com



Canadian Space Agency

- Author: Sarah Zhang.
- Date of Publication: 05.10.16. 05.10.16
- Time of Publication: 5:27 pm.5:27 pm

That Long-Lost Mayan City a Teen Found Isn't Lost ... or a City

How can you resist a headline like “Quebec teen may have discovered long lost

Mayan city”? Alas, the story going viral today is too good to be true, according to archaeological experts. The supposed lost pyramid? More likely an abandoned field.

This much is true: William Gaudry, now 15, won a contest to present his theory that Maya cities were correlated with constellations at a conference a few years ago. He happened to be next to a booth of the Canadian Space Agency, where scientists took notice and decided to help the kid out. So Canada turned its RADARSAT-2, a satellite that usually tracks sea ice and shipping in Canada, to a remote corner of Mexico—right where Goudry’s constellation theory predicted a city would be. Lo and behold, those images seemed to show manmade structures.

Satellite imagery can be a powerful tool for studying the ancient world. “Space archaeologists” like Sarah Parcak want to use readily available data like this to lower the barriers to entry in science, and a teenager finding a long-lost city would be a pretty stunning proof of concept. But that isn’t what the images show.

The square in the CSA’s satellite images is probably an abandoned field, and another spot may be a small dry lake or clearing in the jungle, says archaeologist Ivan Šprajc. Gizmodo, in its updated story, has noted the same about the square structure.

Moreover, experts are skeptical of the claim that the Maya built their cities according to constellations. They did indeed have constellations, but there is no complete canonical list of them, so the theory is hard to test. “Maya constellations that we know of, with the exception of Scorpio, bear no relation to those we find on modern star maps,” says Anthony Aveni, a founder of the field of archaeoastronomy. What seem like bizarre locations for cities can be explained by other factors, like access to swamp mud for their terraces.

And no matter what your star map tells you, chances are good you’ll hit upon a settlement in that area. “The Maya area was so densely occupied in Classic Maya times that many years ago a well known archaeologist, Ed Kurjack, told me that the area looked much like the Ohio

Valley, denuded of trees and full of towns that were fairly close to one another,” wrote Susan Milbrath, a curator at the Florida Museum of Natural History, in an email. “So at any given point you would be likely to find an archaeological site.” The archaeologist Richard Hansen pointed out that the location appears to be very close to that of the ancient Mayan city of Uxul, which has been under excavation since 2009—not exactly a long-lost city.

A teenager inquisitive enough to dig deep into Maya cities and constellations is awesome. The possibility of satellite imagery for archeology is awesome, too. But let's not overblow it.

All of us at WIRED appreciate your support!

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Louisiana Urban Legends, Monsters, and Haunted Places

Updated on April 17, 2016

3 years ago from Somewhere between Heaven and Hell without a road map.

exmple.com

Is It The Guinea Pig Rougarou?

Long before hurricane Katrina brought forth the tales of sharks and alligators swimming through the flooded streets of new Orleans in 2005, there already existed a vast amount of urban legends and ghost stories involving the State of Louisiana. From werewolves to vampires, zombies and ghosts, Louisiana seems to have it all.

The tales of voodoo and witchcraft, along with the ghosts and monsters of Louisiana have made it one of, if not the biggest resource, for paranormal research and urban legends in the United States. With that being said, it is with creepy pleasure, that I give you this edition of "Urban Legends, Monsters and Haunted Places" from the great State of Louisiana.

The Rougarou - Southern Louisiana

The legends of the rougarou, or loup-garou, have been passed down from generation to generation as long as Louisiana has been inhabited by modern man. The rougarou are closely related to the European version of the werewolf, but has a few very distinct differences from the wolf men seen in movies and on television.

Wolves are not native to Louisiana, so many times the beast in the story is replaced with other animals such as dogs, pigs or cattle, and generally appear as being pale white in color. As the story goes, the rougarou will wander the streets at night searching for a savior amongst the crowds of people. It will run through and cause havoc to each individual until somebody eventually shoots or stabs the creature.

With the first drop of blood drawn in the dying blow the beast will then turn back into a man and reveal to its attacker his true name. This legend is said to usually happen within the smallest of towns in Louisiana, because of this the rougarou is often already known by its killer. Before the dying man takes his last breath of life he will warn his savior that he can not mention a word of the incident to anyone for one full year, or he too will suffer the same fate, and become the rougarou.

Parents are often known to spin the tales of the rougarou to children who misbehave, warning them that if they don't straighten up they will be visited by the rougarou in their bed come nightfall. One account tells of a boy who encountered the beast while on his way home from a night out with friends. As the boy was walking along a large white dog was following behind nipping at his heels and antagonizing the boy to attack. Finally out of annoyance and slight anger the boy took out his knife and slashed the dog open, at that point the beast then turned back into a man.

In this case, the rougarou told the boy how he had sold his soul to the devil to gain prosperity, but was tricked by Satan and changed into the beast instead. As the curse seems to demand, he then warned the boy of the penalty of mentioning the events that had taken place, but the

boy just couldn't resist.

After repeating the story to several friends the boy started to disappear from his room at night and none of his friends or family could find him anywhere until the following morning, at which point he would appear back in his room with no explanation to where he had been.

This went on for about a year, until one morning his body was found laying in the street. The police claimed it was most likely suicide, but friends and family of the boy knew that there would soon be a new rougarou roaming the streets. Anyone who has ever lived in a small town knows that no story can be kept secret for long, not even the tale of the rougarou.

LaLaurie Mansion - New Orleans, Louisiana

The Madame LaLaurie Mansion (sometimes spelled LeLaurie) is considered by many to be the single most gruesome haunting in the United States. With almost 180 years of reported violent activity, its tale is not for the faint of heart. The LaLaurie family first moved into the Creole mansion on Royal street in 1832.

The madame of the house, Delphine, was well known throughout the city for her grand parties and fine taste in clothing and décor. The locals considered it a great honor to be invited to one of her luxurious gatherings to be wined and dined while relaxing on expensive furniture, imported from all over the world.

Though Delphine was well respected by many for her intelligence and wealth, there were those few who knew her for what she truly was from the very beginning, a cruel, evil and heartless creature who would do whatever it took to be amused and get whatever she wanted.

Slavery in itself was one of the worst crimes against humanity that was ever committed, but Madame LaLaurie managed to take this cruel act a step further than that, proving exactly how cruel she really was.

Delphine had been known to brutally torture even the youngest of her servants, often whipping them to death and merely replacing them with another as if they were just old clothing. It is told that she kept her cook chained to the stove for over 16 hours a day, then locking her in a dark room for the night, until the new day began.

There was just no limit to this evil woman's horrifying treatment to other human beings. Eventually, after a neighbor had seen LaLaurie burying a young girl in a shallow grave the authorities took Delphine's servants away from her, but the insane woman only needed to have relatives purchase them back from the public auctions so she could continue her horrid abuse.

In 1834 a fire was started in the kitchen of the LaLaurie Mansion, apparently set by the cook who could no longer take the abuse. When firefighters showed up and put out the blazing fire they discovered a more horrifying site than they could have ever imagined.

Within the smoking remains of the fire and water damaged interior of the home they found a barred door, beyond that were dozens of slaves chained to the walls and home made operating tables. The madame had been using them as play-toys in her sadistic games for her own sickening pleasure. Surrounding those who were still barely alive were the dismembered remains of those who Delphine had already finished off.

The degree of torture LaLaurie put these poor souls through is far worse than any serial killer known to the world thus far. A young man was chained to the wall with a sharp stick protruding from his head where a hole had been drilled, authorities say the woman had been using the stick to stir the mans brains, on one of the makeshift tables a woman had her stomach cut open, her intestines pulled out and tied tightly around the her waist like a gruesome belt, and there were so many others in the room as well, all suffering various forms of abuse and torture.

Word of the woman's evil rapidly spread throughout the city and soon a large mob gathered outside of the horrid creature's home to serve up punishment for the insane woman's acts of violence and torture. Unfortunately it was far to late, the family had escaped the city immediately following the fire, never to be seen or heard from again.

Once the victims were removed the enraged neighbors had taken their anger out on the house itself, destroying the beast's belongings. It was soon after that the reports of the haunting began.

Only a short time passed before the mansion was once again occupied by new comers to the city, but none of the occupants ever stayed for long. The reports of screaming and crying throughout the night were bad, but nothing compared to the ghastly sight of the decapitated apparitions and angry spirits that were constantly seen roaming the corridors and passing through the large rooms of the mansion.

Throughout the years the building has gone through many changes and renovations, from a private school to apartments for the privileged. Though the screams and apparitions have faded through time, they are still occasionally reported by scared tenants and visitors who know little or nothing of the cruel history linked to the mansion of Madame LaLaurie.

The Grunch - Eastern New Orleans, Louisiana

The Grunch is a New Orleans based urban legend closely related to the chupacabra. Back when New Orleans was first developing the Eastern suburbs there existed an old road barely known of by most residents of the area. This road was long and narrow and led off into the deep thicket of woods surrounding the area, eventually coming to a dead end.

According to legend there was a strange group of humans living in these woods that were a strange mix of albinos and dwarfs, forced to live away from society, during a time when people who were thought of as different were considered creations of the devil. Because of humanities cruel nature, these people became a sort of side show for teenagers and immature adults.

The locals claim that their seclusion to the woods had caused the people to interbreed and combine their abnormalities to eventually become almost inhuman in appearance. At this point in time the end of that long road, then labeled "Grunch" road, was considered nothing but a freak-show and occasionally a make out spot for desperate teens who may not have believed the legends, that is until people started to disappear.

It started out with a few goats here and there, nearby farmers reporting their animals missing or finding them dead and drained of their blood. Before long adult humans began disappearing as well, and reports of strange deformed creatures roaming the woods at the end of "Grunch" road were multiplying everyday.

Some say the albino dwarf people sold their souls for a beast to protect them from the onlookers who treated them as freaks, while others claim the beasts are the offspring of the albinos and dwarfs, deformed from many years of inbreeding and mixing abnormalities, driven insane from the cruel treatment they endured from society.

Legends say, you will first see a stray goat along the side of the road, appearing to be injured or in need of assistance. It isn't until you leave the safety of your vehicle to help the animal that the grunch comes out to drain you of your blood and feast upon your flesh. The next time you see a stray goat wandering the side of the road, just remember there may be a grunch nearby waiting, ready to have his taste.

Epilogue

Louisiana may just be, the most haunted region of the United States, it certainly has more urban legends, monsters and haunted places than I could possibly write about in one article. It was a lot of fun, though at times disturbing, researching the Louisiana edition of this series, I hope that you enjoy reading it, as much as I enjoyed writing it.

If there is anything you would care to add be sure to leave a comment in the area below. Thanks for stopping by, I look forward to hearing any tales of the creepy and unusual you may care to share.

DS Duby

Comments 27 comments

Sunshine625 3 years ago from Orlando, FL

This is the first in your series that I've read. I had no idea that Louisiana was even considered haunted. I have no tales to share, I tend to steer clear of creepy stuff. I appreciate that you didn't scare me off and I was able to finish reading your hub!:)

TToombs08

Awesome hub as usual, Scott! Well done and very interesting. VUMS.

DS Duby 3 years ago from United States, Illinois Author

Most of my legends are more on the strange and unusual side rather than being to scary, thank you for reading and commenting Sunshine625 it's definitely appreciated

DS Duby 3 years ago from United States, Illinois Author

Thank you Terrye I really appreciate that. I enjoy writing the urban legend articles a lot but I think I may find a new topic for tomorrow to give me a change of pace.

Mhatter99 3 years ago from San Francisco

Thank you for this. I like to believe. (it'me - Martin)

DS Duby 3 years ago from United States, Illinois Author

Thank you for the comment. I too like to believe it keeps us feeling younger to think there are things out there that we still don't understand.

ChristyWrites 3 years ago from British Columbia, Canada

What interesting hubs you write DS Duby! Your research on these tales is great.

DS Duby 3 years ago from United States, Illinois Author

Thank you Christy, I really enjoy researching the the odd and bizarre. Especially if it's not proven to be either real or fake, though Madame LaLaurie was very real the haunting on the other hand I have no idea. Thanks for reading and commenting.

dwachira 3 years ago from Nairobi, Kenya

DS Duby, what an interesting hub you have here. I enjoyed reading about legends and i love stories about legends. I thinks every society has its own versions of legends, but if you listen to those legends keenly they try to pass a certain message to that particular society like being kind, helpful, unselfish, unfearful...and i think nights seemed shorter when we were young because a night with legend stories was always welcome. Voted up, interesting and shared.

DS Duby 3 years ago from United States, Illinois Author

Thank you very much dwachira, I have to agree there is always a lesson to be learned from legends. I know I used to love hearing the stories my mother would tell from her childhood. Thanks again for reading, commenting and sharing.

Dominique L 3 years ago from Oregon

Well done, as always, my friend.

And for the record, the LeLaurie house is haunted. I couldn't even walk within a block of the house without mysteriously getting nauseous. Although the worst part has nothing to do with the haunting, but the people who live and work in the building now, who think it's really funny to freak people out because of the legend.

One of the legends that apparently made the LeLaurie's neighbors in the area start to whisper was that one night they heard shouting from the roof of the house, and saw Daphine chasing someone with a whip. It was a little slave girl who ran to the edge of the building and threw herself off. Well, one night, when a walking tour that told ghost stories had stopped outside this building, the owner's son decided he wanted to have some fun, so he climbed on the roof, and, as soon as the group showed up, started making all kinds of noise, and when the guide got to the part in the story where the girl jumps off the roof, the son chucked a dummy off and it landed in the street next to the group. Scared the @\$% out of them.

DS Duby 3 years ago from United States, Illinois Author

I heard the story of the little girl but the article was running long so I left it out. I had no idea about the prank though. Thanks for the input on it being truly haunted, I would think that if anyplace would be it would be that place with its very cruel history. Thanks for stopping by and commenting Dominique L.

AEvans 3 years ago

OMG! LaLaurie was horrific and sadistic! That sent chills down my spine. Drilling a hole in a man's head? Wrapping a woman's intestines around her waist? What a horrific way to be tortured and then killed? She was insane and It's sad that someone in this Country has the burden of carrying the family name. Who did she think she was? I know where her soul went to, and it was not a nice place. Thumbs up!!!! You are amazing! :)

DS Duby 3 years ago from United States, Illinois Author

Thank you very much for your kind words AEvans, I'm sure LaLaurie's soul is burning right now. I can't even conceive the thought of that level of cruelty in anyone. I am just grateful that people like her are not a common occurrence in the world. Thanks again for reading and commenting.

kittythedreamer 3 years ago from the Ether

Very nicely done! Very interesting, too. I had heard of the LaLaurie Mansion but not the

others. Voted up, awesome, and interesting. Are you getting a lot of hits on your hubs yet? Just curious.

DS Duby 3 years ago from United States, Illinois Author

Thank you very much, kittythedreamer I'm not doing to bad on hits I'm at 11,500 in 8 weeks so I'm happy.

Joseph-Isaak Mail 3 years ago from I preside on the American side of the Atlantic Ocean

I'm really excited that you did my home state! I remembered growing up and visiting New Orleans with no prior knowledge of LaLaurie; some of the people there didn't want to go near the building.

DS Duby 3 years ago from United States, Illinois Author

Thank you joseph-Isaak Mail your enthusiasm is really appreciated. I loved researching Louisiana it was by far my favorite so far. Your state holds so many great interests to me. Thank you again for reading and commenting.

kittythedreamer 3 years ago from the Ether

DS Duby - 11,500 hits in 8 weeks is a great accomplishment! Keep hubbing.

DS Duby 3 years ago from United States, Illinois Author

Thank you kittythedreamer I will definitely keep Hubbing I love it! I am just under 16000 views now I'm very excited. Thanks again for reading and commenting

rahul0324 3 years ago from Gurgaon, India

I was most intrigued by the LaLaurie Mansion story and was saddened the mad lady had not been brought to justice..

A very intriguing hub

DS Duby 3 years ago from United States, Illinois Author

Thanks Rahul, it saddened me as well. Nobody has a right to treat anyone like meaningless objects but that woman was by far one of the worst ever.

jennzie 3 years ago from Lower Bucks County, PA

These are very interesting stories... that Daphne was one evil woman.

Great hub, voted up and interesting.

DS Duby 3 years ago from United States, Illinois Author

Thanks Jennzie for reading and commenting!

Kris 2 years ago

I am from New Orleans and still live here...I enjoyed reading your article...I never heard of the Grunch Road before...will have to check on that one...but as far as the other articles go...yes those are very true...when you travel up in New Orleans at night around the area we call up-town around Magazine street...the houses are built with the essence of Victorian and of the turn of the century...but yet have a sense of beauty to creepiness....

Ckappy 19 months ago

Im writing a paper on urban legends for my writing class for college. This was really interesting, thanks! Helped out a lot!

Djbnola 16 months ago

Being from New Orleans myself I found this hub rather amusing and only legend I didn't hear about growing up was the grunches but I tell you what I was told time and time again never go into the woods during lent and never stray from the path made out for when you do then the ruegarue will come to chase you down and eat you up. Also there are a few legends surrounding jean laffietes hang man's tree down old barataria blvd going into the dark swamps back in Jefferson parish between marrero and crown point

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Lowewood Museum Exhibition aims to lift the lid on ghoulish part of British history

May 19th 2016

hertfordshiremercury.co.uk

By Hertfordshire Mercury | Posted: May 16, 2016

By Sam Meadows

A black cat, a broomstick and a pointy hat are a few of the ghoulish items which come to mind when you think of witches.

But a new exhibition aims to lift the lid on the truth behind one of the biggest witch-hunts in the history of England.

The display, at the Lowewood Museum in Hoddesdon, covers the Great Witch Hunt which swept through East Anglia between 1645 and 1647.

The hunt has spawned several popular culture references, including the 1968 film *The Witchfinder General*, based on the exploits of Matthew Hopkins who led the hunt.



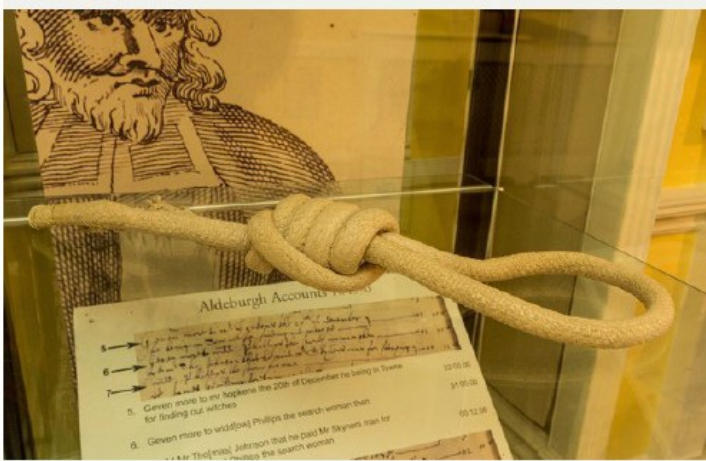
But the museum's development officer Carly Hearn said the exhibition was aimed at getting to the truth behind the myths.

"The hunt took place at the height of the English Civil War and the exhibition tells the story of what was happening in this area at that time," she said.

"It starts looking at some of the common myths surrounding witches throughout history and continuing through to the present day.

"For example, people often believe witches were all women. Actually 20 per cent of

people accused of witchcraft were men."

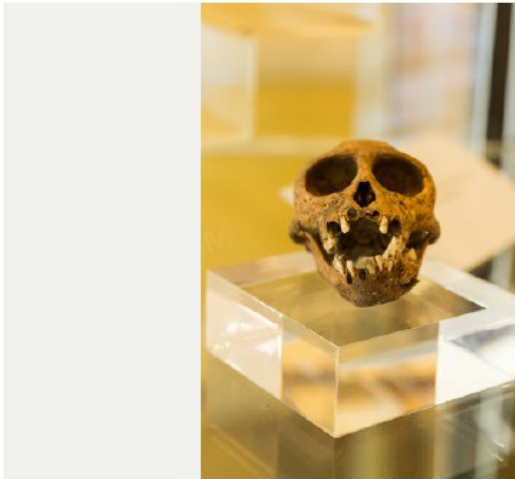


An estimated 50,000 people were accused of being witches in England between 1500 and 1800 and, contrary to popular belief, the majority of those executed were hanged, rather than burnt at the stake.

"The war broke out in 1642 and there was an incredible disconnect in community at that time, with rising food prices and unemployment," she said.

"There was a lot of distrust and a lot of people were thought to be witches. People believed in demons and spirits so some thought it was possible to call upon the Devil's power.

"There was a strong belief that certain animals, cats, dogs or mice, could be a witch's familiar."



Witchcraft was first criminalised by King Henry VIII in 1542 which led to the later witch hunts, but as recently as 1944 a spiritualist named Helen Duncan was jailed for nine months using the Witchcraft Act.

Carly said, despite the Government's best efforts, the public and press painted the case as a 'witch trial' and the act was eventually repealed in 1951.

The Lowewood exhibition houses several intriguing artefacts which demonstrate the area's deep history of witchcraft.

Some of the highlights are a 17th-century shoe which was found The Grange in Hoddesdon and a Tudor crossbar from Waltham Abbey.



The bar would have sat on top of a 14-foot post and suspected witches would have been forced to stand on top of this for as long as six hours.

The exhibition is free to attend and is open until June 25.

For more information visit www.broxbourne.gov.uk/leisure or call the museum on (01992) 445596.



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Charge reduced for mall Easter bunny in brawl with kid's dad

April 29, 2016

yahoo.com

JERSEY CITY, N.J. (AP) — A New Jersey mall Easter bunny who got into a scuffle with a father last month has had a criminal charge against him downgraded.

NJ.com reports (<http://bit.ly/21jO9eB>) a Hudson County judge Wednesday downgraded the aggravated assault charge against Kassim Charles to the disorderly persons offense of simple assault. The case also was sent to the Jersey City Municipal Court.

Charles is from Jersey City. He had been playing the role of the Easter bunny. Authorities say Juan Jimenez-Guerrero attacked Charles when his toddler daughter slipped from a chair while getting her photo taken.

A video posted online shows them exchanging punches at the Newport Centre.

Charles' defense attorney says they look forward to vindicating "the bunny."

An update on an aggravated assault charge against Jimenez-Guerrero is unavailable. Jimenez-Guerrero's wife says he was trying to protect their child.

Information from: NJ Advance Media.

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Man gets penis stuck in spanner

13/05/2016

news.com.au

Tweed Heads fires use angle grinder to free man's penis from ring spanner

May 13, 2016 6:38pm



A man got his penis stuck in a ring spanner at the Tweed.

A MAN was left red-faced when firefighters had to be called to hospital to remove a tool from his penis.

The man became stuck after his penis swelled up in the ring spanner on Monday and was he unable to remove it.

Tweed firefighters say it not uncommon for them to be called to such jobs where people leave it too late to ask for help.

"It's really dangerous because inevitably people leave it too long

to come see us because they are embarrassed, or say my wife said to put butter on it, sleep on it and it will go down," said senior firefighter Peter Sutherland.

"It never does."

Mr Sutherland said one man took his girlfriend with him to the hospital.

"The blood goes into the appendage whether it's a finger or whatever, it just swells up and by the time you realise it's too late," he said.

"We use a tiny angle grinder that's air operated and use measuring tape to protect the skin and slowly zip away at it while keeping water running on it so it doesn't get too hot.

"It's a pretty delicate operation especially where it is, there's a lot of blood vessels.

"We do quite a few of them."

Originally published as Man gets penis stuck in spanner

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Maori skulls to be repatriated to New Zealand - BBC News

bbc.com



By News from Elsewhere... ..as found by BBC Monitoring

• 12 May 2016



The museum holds repatriation ceremonies, such as this one in 2012, at its traditional marae - or meeting place

Image copyrightAFP/Getty Images

The remains of dozens of Maori are due to be returned to New Zealand from museums in the US and UK, more than 100 years after being taken from their native land.

The national museum, Te Papa, is preparing for the return of heads and skulls belonging to 60 Maori and Moriori, the indigenous people of the Chatham Islands, marking the second-largest repatriation in its history, the New

Zealand Herald reports. The trade in indigenous peoples' remains was rife through the 19th Century, despite being officially banned in 1831, largely due to a Western fascination with "exotic" cultures, the museum says.

"These were dark days, when these tupuna [ancestors] were traded, collected and stolen, but today we have the opportunity to put right the mistakes of the past," Dr Arapata Hakiwai, the museum's Maori co-leader, tells the paper.

Among the remains which will be welcomed on 27 May are four tattooed preserved Maori heads - known as Toi moko - and the skull of a seven-year-old child. While most had been kept at the Smithsonian in Washington DC, several British institutions, including the Falconer Museum in Scotland, are returning individual skulls held in their collections.

The museum has a team dedicated to bringing ancestral remains home from museums around the world. The largest repatriation so far was in 2014, when Te Papa secured the return of 107 Maori and Moriori remains from the American Museum of Natural History.

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The prima ballerina who joined a coup to topple the government of Panama

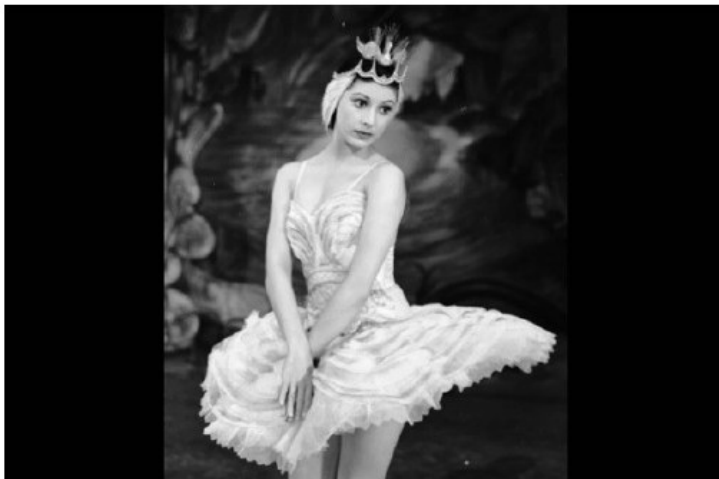
Thursday 31st March 2016

historyextra.com



For nearly 40 years, she was queen of the ballet stage, but Margot Fonteyn once set her sights on becoming Queen of Panama.

This article was first published in the April 2016 issue of History Revealed



Margot Fonteyn in *Swan Lake*, 1943. (Tunbridge/Tunbridge-Sedgwick Pictorial Press/Getty Images)

With unmatched musicality and grace, technical skill bordering on perfection, and passion stamped on every performance, there was no one like Margot Fonteyn. From her debut as a teenager in 1934 to her famous partnership with Rudolf Nureyev, the British ballet dancer was hailed as the greatest of her – perhaps any – generation. Fonteyn was, quite simply, born to dance.

What came less naturally, however, was her one-time performance as a political revolutionary. In April 1955, it

was revealed she had become embroiled in a somewhat farcical coup to place her Panamanian husband in power – which was crushed in a matter of hours and left the world's press asking rather strange questions, such as whether the prima ballerina of the Royal Ballet carried a gun.

INTO THE SPOTLIGHT

Margaret Evelyn Hookham was born, in the Surrey town of Reigate, on 18 May 1919, and it didn't take long before she donned her first leotard. She was four when her mother signed her up to ballet classes along with her older brother, and she continued to dance throughout her childhood, which included a six-year family move to China.

From the age of 14, she studied at the prestigious Sadler's Wells ballet school in London (today, the Royal Ballet School), where she excelled, made her debut, was named prima ballerina and took on a new name, Margot Fonteyn.

Audiences and dancers alike ran out of superlatives to describe her near-perfect physique and poise – remarkable in a world where every blemish was, and still is, magnified – in *Giselle*, *Swan Lake* and her iconic 1939 turn as Aurora in *The Sleeping Beauty*.

Throughout the 1940s, she worked with a host of dancers, composers and choreographers,

notably Sir Frederick Ashton, but it was the Royal Ballet's 1949 tour of the United States that hurled Fonteyn into the international spotlight. Seemingly single-handed, she brought ballet to the masses.

SLAPDASH COMEDY

So what would compel this ballet star, by now a dame, to get involved in politics? In 1955, Fonteyn married Dr Roberto Emilio Arias, Panama's ambassador to Britain and son of a former President. 'Tito' plotted to oust Panama's authoritarian government and seize power, and his wife consented, seeing the whole thing as an adventure. "She did it for a lark," a friend of Fonteyn's later claimed, as she thought she would end up "Queen of Panama".

It was not to be. The coup turned out to be less of an action-adventure and more, as one British diplomat described it, of a "slapdash comedy".



Fonteyn arrives at London Airport after the misjudged coup in Panama. (Keystone/Hulton Archive/Getty Images)

The plan, set for April 1959, was for the couple to land their luxury yacht on Panama's coast, before they would collect supporters and ammunition and seize a nearby highway, an important artery of the country. Fonteyn even travelled to New York to ask a friend, connected to the clothing industry, for 500 uniforms and armbands for their rebel army. The coup would be assisted by men from Fidel Castro's Cuba.

Yet it was a risible failure.

Fonteyn was arrested after fishermen alerted authorities, Tito went on the run, students who were going to help capture the capital rose up too early so were dealt with easily and Castro's troops never showed up.

After spending 24 hours in a Panama City prison, Fonteyn was sent back to Britain, where she was mobbed by journalists. While being quizzed by the press, Fonteyn was in high spirits. When one reporter asked whether she carried a gun, she replied with a laugh, "I won't answer that, because you can guess whether I carried a gun or not!"

Most thought she was an entirely innocent bystander, with no idea of her husband's plans. The shadow Foreign Secretary (NHS founder Aneurin Bevan) welcomed her home by saying, "The British public did not appreciate having seen her in the role of the swan, then seeing her in the role of a decoy duck."

Documents released in 2010, however, demonstrated that Fonteyn was willingly involved. Once home, she met with government minister John Profumo (who would get caught up in his own scandal two years later) and related the bizarre series of events. "I had to pinch

myself several times during her visit," he later wrote, "to be sure I wasn't dreaming the comic opera story which she unfolded."

PARTNERS IN THE SUBLIME

If anyone thought the coup signalled the end of Fonteyn's career – as she was over 40, many believed she was close to retirement anyway – they were mistaken. Actually, the best was yet to come. In 1962, she performed for the first time with Rudolf Nureyev, a 24-year-old who had defected from the Soviet Union.



Fonteyn with Nureyev in 'Pelleas and Melisandre' at Covent Garden, 1969. (Victor Blackman/Express/Getty Images)

Their partnership was a revelation, with their debut at Covent Garden receiving 23 curtain calls, and that was only the beginning.

Many regard Fonteyn and Nureyev as the greatest dancing partnership in history. As they became close friends (or, as rumoured, lovers), they danced together for the next 17 years, when Fonteyn finally retired, aged 61.

She spent the rest of her life on a cattle farm in Panama to give constant care to her husband – who had been shot

and paralysed in 1964 – but she stayed in touch with Nureyev every week. In 1991, Fonteyn died from cancer.

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Where marrying a local is forbidden

By Brianna Randall 21 April 2016

bbc.com



On this



Palmerston island (Credit: Credit: Cindy Hopkins/Alamy)

fascinating South Pacific island, all 62 residents are related, everyone shares the same surname and can trace their lineage back to one British man.

We saw the foam before we heard the breaking waves. My husband Rob and I squinted through the morning sun, trying to pick out the low-lying shoreline of the Palmerston Atoll on the horizon. After sailing for five days through rolling blue swells, the line of white signifying land was a welcome sight. Rob did a little dance in anticipation of spearing a fish for dinner. I was more excited about delving into this bizarre community I'd heard so much about.

As the tiny settlement came closer, we hailed the island over the VHF radio to announce our arrival. Within minutes, a scuffed aluminium boat was speeding toward us from inside the protected lagoon. The driver cut the outboard and bobbed alongside our stern.



Palmerston has only 62 residents (Credit: Credit: Cindy Hopkins/Alamy)

Palmerston has only 62 residents (Credit: Cindy Hopkins/Alamy)

"I'm Simon Marsters," said the short, shirtless driver. "Has anyone greeted you yet?" We shook our heads. Simon grunted in satisfaction. "Good. I'll be your host. You can use my mooring with that yellow buoy, then I'll take you in for lunch."

Our cruising guidebook had warned us about the "extreme hospitality" of Palmerston. No foreigner is allowed to set foot on shore without first being adopted into a local family. Visitors

are encouraged to reciprocate the islanders' hospitality with donations of clothes, pens and other staples. Apparently, we'd now been adopted.



Palmerston is remote island in the South Pacific (Credit: Credit: Cindy Hopkins/Alamy)

Palmerston is remote island in the South Pacific (Credit: Cindy Hopkins/Alamy)

Located halfway between the better-known South Pacific sailing ports of Bora Bora and Niue, the Palmerston Atoll is so remote that until 1969 its position on maps was based on Captain Cook's charts from 1774. In fact, Palmerston is the only Cook Island that the prolific Pacific explorer actually set foot on,

though the clump of 15 islands are named for him. Cook dubbed the then-uninhabited atoll Palmerston, after Britain's first Lord of the Admiralty.

Today Palmerston is a postcard-perfect paradise with no bank, store or road – islanders have to travel 800km south to the largest island, Rarotonga, to find these modern day conveniences. But what makes this tiny Cook Islands outlier more than just a pretty place are the quirks that footnote its culture: the island has the highest number of freezers per capita in the Southern Hemisphere; locals play volleyball every afternoon except Sunday; and all 62 of its residents are related – everyone on Palmerston shares the same surname and trace their lineage back to one man: William Marsters.



On the Palmerston atoll, everyone shares the same surname (Credit: Credit: Rob Roberts)

On the Palmerston atoll, everyone shares the same surname (Credit: Rob Roberts)

A British adventurer, William Marsters landed on uninhabited Palmerston in 1883 to set up a copra (dried coconut) trade with other Polynesian islands. He brought two Polynesian wives from neighbouring Penrhyn, and later recruited a third wife from the same island,

producing an impressive colony of 23 children and 134 grandchildren. Before he died in 1899, Marsters divided the 2sqkm atoll into thirds to give each of the three wives and their

descendants a share. The residents still govern themselves based on these hypothetical lines in the sand, and cluster their families on their respective chunk of the atoll. Marriage within the island is prohibited, so those who choose to stay must import a mate.

Rob and I packed a bag to go ashore with Simon, bringing fishing tackle as a gift, along with notebooks for the kids at the island's only school.



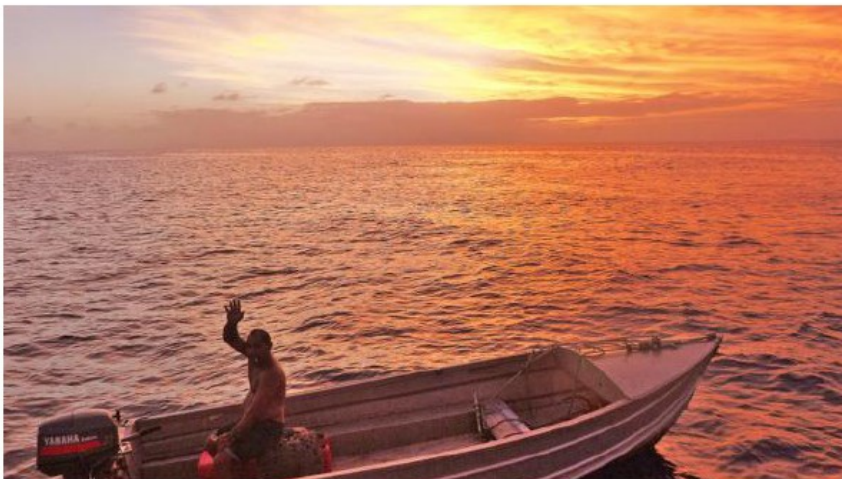
Brianna and Rob sailed for five days before landing at Palmerston (Credit: Credit: Rob Roberts)

Brianna and Rob sailed for five days before landing at Palmerston (Credit: Rob Roberts)

Our host gunned the powerful outboard engine directly toward the waves breaking on the atoll's fringing reef. I held on tight, praying that he wouldn't miss the tiny, 3m wide pass through the reef. As the boat surfed down a

wave through the tight gap, coral jutting out on both sides, I was relieved we didn't have to navigate through in our own small rubber dinghy.

Once safely inside the lagoon, we skimmed across flat cerulean water toward the bright white sand framing the island. Wind, rain and waves have slowly eroded the atoll, leaving most of it just barely submerged. The highest point on the entire island is only 6m high – a man-made mound called "Refuge Hill" where the residents cluster during summer cyclones.



In order to visit Palmerston, you must be adopted by a local (Credit: Credit: Rob Roberts)

In order to visit Palmerston, you must be adopted by a local (Credit: Rob Roberts)

A beached ship greeted us as we stepped ashore, battered, broken and belly up.

"Recent wreck?" Rob asked.

"Maybe four, five years ago," replied Simon. His speech was slow to make room for a slight stutter. "Good wood for building."

He pointed out William Marsters' original home through the coconut trees. With a rusting tin

roof and half-metre-wide planks harvested from 19th-century boat timbers, the long building looked more like a barn than a home. But it served its purpose as a sturdy shelter: the structure has successfully withstood dozens of cyclones over the past 150 years.



Palmerston is located in the Pacific Ocean (Credit: Credit: Rob Roberts)

Palmerston is located in the Pacific Ocean (Credit: Rob Roberts)

Several people greeted us as we walked on to Simon's house. A teenage girl came over to ask where we were heading next, and was disappointed to hear us say Niue. She was looking for a ride south to visit an aunt in Rarotonga.

Boats are still the only mode of transportation to and from this atoll. A cargo ship from Rangiroa, the largest city in the Cook Islands, stops by just three times a year to drop off supplies, loading back up with crates full of flash-frozen parrotfish, Palmerston's only export. Every family has several large freezers filled with this rainbow-coloured, large-scaled reef-grazer.



Parrotfish are Palmerston's only export (Credit: Credit: Rob Roberts)

Parrotfish are Palmerston's only export (Credit: Rob Roberts)

Palmerston residents sometimes hop aboard the cargo ship, squeezing in alongside the chest freezers, to visit neighbouring islands or to catch a flight to New Zealand from Rarotonga or Niue. The only other option for leaving the island is to hitchhike on a passing

sailboat. But the window for thumbing a ride is narrow: yachts only travel through this part of the South Pacific from May through September to avoid cyclones and maximize the trade winds.

At Simon's small house we sat down to a lunch of flaky, succulent parrotfish – baked with head, tail and fins still attached – with his niece, grandnephew, brother and 89-year-old mother. I asked if they got sick of eating fish. Simon's mother laughed, nodding. She said she preferred to eat "real meat", referring to the white-tailed tropicbirds that nest throughout the atoll.



Every day, the locals meet to play volleyball at 4pm (Credit: Credit: Rob Roberts)

Every day, the locals meet to play volleyball at 4pm (Credit: Rob Roberts)

For dessert, Simon split open two coconuts for Rob and me.

"Do you play volleyball?" Simon asked. "We play at 4 pm."

A lifelong volleyball player, Rob's face lit up. "The only thing we like better than

volleyball is church," Simon's niece said. The Palmerston natives attend services daily and several times on Sundays, always dressed in their finest.

We agreed to meet the family at 4 pm, and set off to explore on our own. It took us 20 minutes to circle the island, another 10 to walk across the interior's main path. We passed the construction site for a new solar power station, which will replace the island's unreliable diesel generators with round-the-clock electricity, and stopped at the cemetery, full of Marsters headstones.



The daily volleyball game often attracts an audience (Credit: Credit: Rob Roberts)

The daily volleyball game often attracts an audience (Credit: Rob Roberts)

As we headed toward the volleyball court, A hefty islander wearing bright board shorts waved us over to warm up with the locals. I quickly realized that their volleyball skills far surpassed mine. Across the net from me, Rob held his own. As he adjusted his top after a particularly

athletic block, returning a high-five, I noticed that Rob's waist was smaller than most of the players' thighs.

As the sun dropped to the horizon, families headed home for dinner.

"Tomorrow, we fish. You will join?" Simon asked as he shuttled us back to our sailboat.

"Definitely," Rob replied.

The Pacific Ocean is full of tropical fish (Credit: Rob Roberts)



The Pacific Ocean is full of tropical fish (Credit: Credit: Rob Roberts)

We stayed on Palmerston another three days. On the last evening, after volleyball and before dark, Simon sat in our cockpit sipping a cocktail and giving Rob fishing tips. Spear in hand, Rob hopped over the side, determined to finally snag one of Palmerston's famous parrotfish. A few minutes later, he surfaced with a blue-

green beauty, as long as his arm and fat as a football. Simon nodded in satisfaction, toasting Rob's success.

We feasted that night with our adopted Marsters family, thanking them for their hospitality by sharing fish and more gifts. But without a doubt, Rob and I gained more from that quirky atoll than we could ever give back.

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Photo: Maryland Goatman Spotted in Washington DC?

cultofweird.com



Cult of Weird

By J Nathan Couch on April 28, 2016

A recent photo seems to show what may be evidence of Maryland's legendary goatman.

*Is this Maryland's elusive goatman?
Photo courtesy of Ryan Davis.*



Photo of the Maryland goatman

On April 25th, Cult of Weird received an email with a very intriguing photograph, which claims to be photographic evidence of the infamous Maryland Goatman, a legendary creature said to haunt several locations in Bowie, Maryland, just outside of Washington DC, including the community of Laurel, where this image was allegedly taken.

I wrote a detailed history of the legend in *Goatman: Flesh or Folklore?*, but for those new to the legend, here are the bare-bones essentials. The creature is often described in campfire tales as strange mutation which somehow escaped from the nearby Beltsville Agricultural Research Center. He's usually described as resembling a Greek Satyr—a

bipedal humanoid with two furry goat-like legs, a human male's upper body and the horns, and sometimes the muzzle, of a goat.

A man named Ryan Davis reportedly took the photo, and had this to say:

I'm in DC for the GRC summit starting today and was playing tennis Saturday morning at Montpelier Park while some friends played golf at Pawtucket Greens. As we were packing up we saw something on the forest bordering the park. As I took out my camera phone it came up onto two feet and I realized it was a goat. I told some people back in DC about a goat waking on two legs and they said it was some old Maryland Goatman legend. I called WBAL in Baltimore and talked to someone about it but I don't think they believe me. They think it's a bear holding a freshly killed goat. They ran the story this morning. As a reader, thought you might enjoy.

The urban legend itself is absolutely absurd. The creature haunts Maryland make out spots, and leaps out at passionate young couples brandishing an ax. The creature was also blamed for locally high-profile pet mutilations in the 1970s.

Many reputable sightings of strange creatures do occur in Bowie, Baltimore, and several other densely populated areas in and around the Washington area, though almost all of the sightings describe large, upright, hairy hominids which sound much more like the equally legendary Bigfoot. Literally hundreds of these sightings have been collected in Mark Opsasnick's essential book, *The Maryland Bigfoot Digest*. Hardly any of the people who've allegedly seen what they call the Goatman, actually describe a creature like the one in the photo.

I do not agree with WBAL's assertion that the photograph depicts a bear carrying a dead goat. That's asinine. The Goat's head clearly belongs to the body of the hairy creature pictured. I do not, however,

believe this to be a legitimate photograph of Goatman.

I would never accuse the photographer of being untruthful, but I do believe he, himself to be the victim of a hoax. The whole thing is just too good to be true.

It's a great photograph. It isn't blurry (meaning the creature wasn't trying to avoid human beings just several feet away), and the only part of the creature's body that's hidden is the legs. The trickiest bit of any decent satyr costume are those utterly bizarre backwards bending goat legs—take it from someone who knows—Halloween costume parties are cutthroat affairs in my family. Perhaps the most suspicious part of the anatomy is the location of the head—low on the shoulders, creating an almost humpbacked appearance. A human's head and shoulders could easily be concealed in the interior of a costume while a taxidermy-ed goat's head is displayed to the prankster's victims.

The Internet lost its collective mind Thanksgiving weekend, 2015, debating the existence of the creature after a MoviePilot.com article brought the creature's alleged existence to the world's attention once more. Five long, cold months is plenty of time for a hoaxer to build a clever costume, to have fun with come Springtime.

If further photographs and sightings occur in the coming days I could change my tune. I hope this is real. I WANT this to be real. But to my eyes, it's just too good to be true.



Maryland goatman photo

J. Nathan Couch is an authority on the subject of goatman legends and the author of Goatman: Flesh or Folklore? For more, go to his website www.jnathancouch.com

Cult of Weird is an online museum of the bizarre, serving weird news and oddities to thousands of curious and macabre minds every day. Have you been initiated?

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'Masked prowler' caught on camera terrorizing Mesquite neighborhood

fox4news.com



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'Masked prowler' caught on camera terrorizing Mesquite neighborhood

Mesquite homeowners hope police can track down a masked prowler who was caught on surveillance cameras in their neighborhood.

By: FOX4News.com Staff

Posted: Apr 27 2016 07:03PM CDT

Updated: Apr 27 2016 07:27PM CDT

Mesquite homeowners hope police can track down a masked prowler who was caught on surveillance cameras in their neighborhood.

Preston Patterson is head of his neighborhood crime watch. He says it all started with a text from his neighbor Friday night.

"So she had texted me saying, 'Somebody tried to get into my house,'" said Patterson. "That really scared me and upset me with the mask."



Photo

Mesquite homeowners hope police can track down a masked prowler who was caught on surveillance cameras in their neighborhood.

Patterson says the woman was home alone with her kids at the time when someone rang the doorbell and jiggled the doorknob. When other neighbors checked their security cameras for anything

suspicious, they found video of the masked prowler.

"Wow. The fact that they had a mask on, almost like stalked the camera and looked at the camera," said neighbor Olden Hatcher. "I was like, that's bold."

Patterson wonders if the masked creeper is part of this group of four young people behaving suspiciously his security cameras recorded them the same night.

"If they are teenagers or kids doing it, doing this sort of thing nowadays, I'm afraid they're going to get hurt first," said Patterson.

Neighbors contacted Mesquite police who say they are investigating this and another similar report in the same neighborhood but can't say if the two are related.

"We haven't found any links to any other burglaries or incidents going on," said Sgt. Joseph Thompson with the Mesquite Police Department. "It's isolated -- a single male as far as we know at this point."

As police investigate, neighbors say they're keeping a close eye out and making sure they alert each other to any suspicious activity.

"This is not the neighborhood you want to mess with," said Hatcher. "This is not the one."

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The day I tried to match Churchill drink for drink

telegraph.co.uk

The Telegraph

The day I tried to match Churchill drink for drink

As I was slumped on the sofa during 'Death in Paradise' and struggling to complete my second pint of champagne, I realised I was never going to match **Sir Winston Churchill's prolific achievements.**



It is at moments, such as these, that you feel your life is a failure. In so many ways.

By my age (40), Churchill had already fought in the Boer War, escaped from a prison camp, written 11 books and served as Home Secretary. Alongside this

appetite for work and adventure, he had also acquired a seemingly gargantuan capacity for food and drink, which he kept until his final days.

He died 50 years ago this month - the anniversary of his funeral will be marked later this week -- at the ripe age of 90. A miracle, considering he had drunk an estimated 42,000 bottles of Pol Roger champagne through his life; he thought nothing of starting the morning with cold game and a glass of hock and ending it at 3am with the best part of a bottle of cognac.

To get a flavour of his extraordinary lifestyle, one formed during the Edwardian era, I set myself the challenge of spending the day drinking what he drank in a typical 24-hour period.

This may sound like one of the less arduous journalistic tasks, but I can assure you that it was surprisingly difficult - not just to physically consume what he put away, but also to pin down how much he really did consume.

As with so many aspects of the great man, his alcoholic intake is subject to a few myths, some burnished by Churchill himself in his own lifetime.

The most famous anecdote -- the Labour MP Bessie Braddock accusing him of being drunk in the Commons, and he answering "Bessie, you are ugly. But tomorrow I will be sober, and you will still be ugly" -- is confirmed by eyewitnesses. But as many point out, he was sober enough to come up with the glorious insult (or, if we are being uncharitable, recycling an old music hall joke).

Cita Stelzer has written an entertaining account of Churchill as a bon-viveur diplomat, "**Dinner with Churchill**". She is adamant that nearly all accounts of Churchill as a drunk were circulated by various enemies, be it the BBC's Lord Reith, Anthony Eden's private secretary Oliver Harvey, who described him as "rather sozzled" or Hitler, who called him an "insane drunkard".

"Certainly, he was not working all those years in such a high pressure job if he was drunk," she tells me.

There are, however, details that emerge from wine merchants' invoices that hint at a monumental appetite for, in particular, whisky, brandy and champagne.

After losing the 1945 election, he went on holiday to stay at Lake Como, with Sarah, his daughter, and

Lord Moran, his doctor. Between them they polished off 96 bottles of champagne in a fortnight; Churchill also drank six or seven whisky and sodas a day, as well as three daily brandies.

His drinking was considered, by some, to be so bad during the "wilderness years" that his friend Lord Rothermere bet him £2,000 he could not give up alcohol during 1936. Churchill refused this bet (£120,000 in today's money), although he agreed to give up spirits in return for £600. He won, though various people say they saw him down numerous glasses of whisky during the period.

One thing is certain: his fondness for kickstarting the day with what he called "mouthwash" -- a weak whisky and soda, which he would take from about 9.30 onwards and keep continually topped up. But the whisky (simple Johnnie Walker, no fancy malt) would only just cover the bottom of the tumbler; the bulk of the drink was soda.

It's a rather delightful way to start the day, as I discover. Especially, when consumed in bed. Churchill would frequently spend all morning in his dressing gown, under the covers, surrounded by papers and secretaries. He would also happily have meetings while taking a hot bath -- a habit I did not attempt to replicate.

Lunch was when the serious drinking began. A whole bottle of champagne was the norm, invariably Pol Roger, a brand Churchill drank from at least 1908. His attachment was cemented in 1944, after meeting Odette Pol-Roger (the grand dame of the champagne house) at the British ambassador's home in Paris, where the 1928 vintage was served in celebration of the liberation of France. She ensured he was never afterwards short of supplies.

A bottle, however, was for Churchill nearly always a pint-sized one, a fairly common measure until it was phased out by champagne houses in the 1970s. He would often drink it out of a silver tankard, still served this way in some gentlemen's clubs.

"It's an excellent way of keeping the drink cold. Silver freshens it up," says James Simpson, the managing director of the UK arm of Pol Roger. "A pint at a sitting is challenging, but not if consumed over four courses."

Sadly, I could lay my hands on neither a silver tankard nor four courses. But 560ml of champagne was a celebratory rather than an absurd amount. The subsequent glass of Churchill's beloved Hine cognac, however, pushed me over the edge.

I was forced to stagger off to bed for a nap, a fine Churchillian habit. He would often sleep for as much as an hour and a half in the afternoon.

Unfortunately, I slept through my alarm, and awoke when it was dark, disorientated and groggy. I then spent the rest of the afternoon (or what was left of it), drinking more whisky and sodas while attempting to write an article -- a task I found increasingly difficult. When I returned to it the following day, I discovered it was barely literate with every other word misspelled.

After dressing for dinner (bombs raining down on London was no reason to let standards slip), Churchill would often have a sherry. A glass of Amontillado failed to sharpen my jaded appetite. Worse, I was rather dreading the second pint of champagne over dinner.

I am aware this sounds churlish, but it became progressively joyless to get through all those bubbles. By 9.30pm I was slumped in front of 'Death in Paradise', working out if the plot or yet another glass was going to finish me off.

I wasn't roaringly drunk at all, but I was feeling queasy. And faced with making packed lunches for the children with a befuddled head, I threw in the towel.

Churchill, by 10pm, would have been moving onto either port or his favourite 90-year-old brandy and at

least four hours of hard work.

He would, with satisfaction, sum up his day to a secretary, even a quiet one at Chartwell spent building walls and working a book: "I laid about 200 bricks and have written 2,000 words."

I managed about 200 misspelled words, and some badly-made packed lunches.

My attempt to emulate Churchill ended in ignominious failure. He is reputed once to have said: "I have taken more out of alcohol than alcohol has taken out of me."

The opposite was the case with me.

For more information about Churchill 2015, go to churchillcentral.com. For the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust, or to make a bequest, go to wcmt.org.uk

Churchill War Rooms: www.iwm.org.uk/churchill-war-rooms

Telegraph Tours: Churchill's Morocco Follow in Churchill's footsteps with this exclusive tour of Morocco in the company of the Telegraph's defence editor, Con Coughlin - from Casablanca and the Atlas mountains to Marrakesh, which Churchill called the "nicest place on Earth to spend an afternoon"

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Credit: Heathcliff O'Malley



19 May, 2015 -
17:08 dhwtj

The word mausoleum is nowadays defined as “a special building made to hold the dead body of an important

person or the deceased bodies of a family”. This word is derived from the name Mausolus, for whom the original ‘Mausoleum’ was built. Located in modern day Bodrum, Turkey, the Mausoleum is one of the ‘Seven Wonders of the Ancient World’. Due to this status, the Mausoleum is one of the most well-known structures in the ancient world. After the Great Pyramid of Giza, this is the longest surviving Wonder, having stood for more than a millennium and a half.

The Mausoleum of Halicarnassus was built for Mausolus, the second ruler of Caria from the Hecatomnid dynasty (and nominally a Persian satrap) who died in 353 BC. As the man who refounded Halicarnassus, Mausolus was entitled to receive cultic honours and a tomb on the central square of his city, in accordance with Greek custom. The person in charge of this project was Mausolus’ grieving widow, Artemisia II, who, incidentally, was also his sister.



Statue of Mausolus at the British Museum, 2012.

Statue of Mausolus at the British Museum, 2012. (Wikimedia Commons)

The design of the Mausoleum is said to have taken its inspiration from the early 4th century BC Nereid Monument of Lycian Xanthos, albeit on a much grander scale. The Greek architects Satyros and Pytheos were said to have been invited by Artemisia from Greece to design the overall shape of the Mausoleum, whilst the sculptors Byraxis, Leocharis, Timotheus, and Scopas of Paros were in charge of the decorations of the monument. Working under them were hundreds of other workmen and craftsmen. The end result was a wonder built in the styles of three different cultures – Greek, Lycian and Egyptian.



A partial reconstruction of the Nereid Monument at Xanthos in Lycia

A partial reconstruction of the Nereid Monument at Xanthos in Lycia (Wikimedia Commons)

Perhaps for maximum visibility, the Mausoleum was built on top of a hill overlooking the city. A stone platform was first built, and was enclosed with a courtyard. The top of this platform was reached by a flight of stairs flanked by stone lions. Along the outer walls of the courtyard were statues of various gods and goddesses, whilst mounted stone warriors were stationed at each corner. At the center of the platform was the Mausoleum itself. Whilst the building was constructed of bricks, it was covered with

white Proconnesian marble, giving it a splendid look.



Detail of the Amazon Frieze from the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus: combats between Amazons and Greeks. 2012 by Carole Raddato. (Wikimedia Commons)

Detail of the Amazon Frieze from the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus: combats between Amazons and Greeks. 2012 by Carole Raddato. (Wikimedia Commons)

The first 1/3 of the Mausoleum was a square, tapering block covered with relief sculptures. These reliefs included standard images from the Greek repertoire, including the Centauromachy (the battle between the Lapiths and centaurs) and the Amazonomachy (the battle between the Greeks and Amazons). The next 1/3 of the monument consisted of a set of 36 Ionic columns. Between each column was a statue, and a solid block was constructed behind the columns to bear the weight of the structure's roof. This roof, which covered the final 1/3 of the building,

was a step pyramid with 24 levels, topped with a sculpture of Mausolus and Artemisia riding a four-horsed chariot.

Whilst the conquest of Alexander the Great several decades later brought the Hecatomnid dynasty to an end, the Mausoleum outlived the dynasty for over a millennium. During the 13th century, a series of earthquakes destroyed the columns, and brought the stone chariot crashing to the ground. By the early 15th century, only the base of the structure was recognisable. By the end of the same century, and again in 1522, following rumors of a Turkish invasion, the Knights of St. John used the stones from the Mausoleum to fortify the walls of their castle in Bodrum. Additionally, much of the remaining sculptures were ground into lime for plaster, though some of the best works were salvaged and mounted in Bodrum castle. Several of these statues were later acquired by the British ambassador for the British Museum.



Photos of the Mausoleum or Halicarnassus, 2013. (Wikimedia Commons)

Photos of the Mausoleum or Halicarnassus, 2013. (Wikimedia Commons)

The location of the Mausoleum was subsequently lost, and was only rediscovered during the 19th century by Charles Thomas Newton, who was working for the British Museum. Newton was successful in his quest, and managed to locate some walls, a staircase, and three of the corners of the foundation. In addition, Newton also discovered sections of reliefs that decorated the wall of the building, portions of the stepped roof, a broken chariot wheel from the sculpture on the roof, and two statues believed to have been in that chariot. These objects were then taken to London, where they are still on display in the British Museum,

though the Turkish authorities are seeking to have them repatriated. They are the last remnants of a once spectacular monument that had the ancient world in awe.

Featured image: Image of the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus, as it would have appeared. (civilization.wikia.com)

By Dhwty

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Mayor Accused Of Stealing 111 Road Signs

huffingtonpost.com

HUFFPOST WEIRD NEWS

Frankfort Village
Mayor Frank**Moracco is on a dangerous (and perhaps unmarked) road.**

04/26/2016 04:02 pm ET | Updated 5 hours ago



Huffington Post Illustration Frank Moracco, the mayor of Frankfort Village, New York, is accused of stealing 111 road signs from the New York State Department of Transportation and giving them to the city's street department.

Apparently, no one saw the signs.

A mayor in upstate New York is facing criminal charges for allegedly stealing 111 road signs from the state's Department of Transportation, according to WKTV.com.

New York State Police arrested

Frank Moracco Monday on charges of misconduct and petit larceny.

Both charges are Class "A" misdemeanors, according to CNYCentral.com.

Moracco, 60, has served as the mayor of Frankfort Village since 2004, and has worked as a sign shop foreman for the state's Department of Transportation since 2001, Syracuse.com reports.

Police started investigating Moracco in July of 2015 after getting a tip from someone in the town, New York State Police spokesman Jack Keller told The Huffington Post.

The said he took 111 road signs made at the shop and gave them to the Village of Frankfort Street Department, according to the Utica Observer-Dispatch.

"There were a variety of signs, including yield and stop signs," Keller told HuffPost. "A village usually has to apply to get signs and then pay a fee. [Moracco] bypassed that process."

Moracco was issued an appearance ticket for the charges and is due in Frankfort Town Court May 3.

It is unknown what has happened to the road signs allegedly stolen by Moracco. Neither he, the Frankfort Village Street Department nor the New York State Police have responded to inquiries from HuffPost.



Frankfort Village clerk Karlee Tamburro told the Observer-Dispatch that the village has no comment on the situation, but that Moracco will continue to serve as mayor.

UPDATE: This version of this story adds quotes from New York State Police spokesman Jack Keller.

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Maypoles and Mayhem - The Traditions of May Day

blogspot.com

<http://darkdorset.blogspot.com/2016/05/maypoles-and-mayhem-traditions-of-may.html>

Dark Dorset Online Scrapbook is an archive of current and past events relating to local history, folklore and mysteries that can be discovered in the English county of Dorset.

Sunday, 1 May 2016



Wessex Morris Men at Sunrise on Giant Hill, Cerne Abbas

Beltane, or May Day (1st of May) is the fertility festival marking the beginning of summer. Every May Day morning at dawn, The Wessex Morris Men climb up to the top of Giant Hill, above the famous chalk figure and fertility symbol 'The Cerne Abbas Giant', to welcome in the coming of Summer with a set of traditional morris dances. This is also the one time of year when the horned Dorset Ooser is brought out from the Dorset County Museum to make its annual appearance. The magical Dorset Ooser is a representation of a bull or Wild Man which by tradition was believed to be a potent source of fertility.

The Wessex Morris Men will perform their annual ritual dance at the Trendle or Giant's Enclosure, above the Cerne Abbas Giant. At sunrise (approx 5.15am) on the site of an ancient maypole high on the hill above the village. They will then process into the village to dance in the square outside the Royal Oak at around 7.00am.

The most well known symbol of May Day is the Maypole. The custom of dancing around the maypole is an ancient fertility rite, which is still performed today on village greens and at spring fetes.

relic of the custom now surviving is to be found among the children of a few out-lying places, who, on May-day, go about with a finely-dressed doll, which they call the Lady of the May, and with a few small semblances of May-poles, modestly presenting these objects to the gentlefolks they meet, as a claim for halfpence, to be employed in purchasing sweetmeats. Our artist has given a very pretty picture of this infantine representation of the ancient festival.

May day clothesIn London there are, and have long been, a few forms of May-day festivity in a great measure peculiar. The day is still marked by a celebration, well known to every resident in the metropolis, in which the chimney-sweeps play the sole part. What we usually see is a small band, composed of two or three men in fantastic dresses, one smartly dressed female glittering with spangles, and a strange figure called Jack-in-the-green, being a man concealed within a tall frame of herbs and flowers, decorated with a flag at top. All of these figures or persons stop here and there in the course of their rounds, and dance to the music of a drum and fife, expecting of course to be remunerated by halfpence from the onlookers. It is now generally a rather poor show, and does not attract much regard; but many persons who have a love for old sports and day-observances, can never see the little troop without a feeling of interest, or allow it to pass without a silver remembrance. How this black profession should have been the last sustainers of the old rites of May-day in the metropolis does not appear.

Mayday DanceAt no very remote time—certainly within the present century—there was a somewhat similar demonstration from the milk-maids. In the course of the morning the eyes of the house-holders would be greeted with the sight of a milch-cow, all garlanded with flowers, led along by a small group of dairy-women, who, in light and fantastic dresses, and with heads wreathed in flowers, would dance around the animal to the sound of a violin or clarinet. At an earlier time, there was a curious addition to this choral troop, in the form of a man bearing a frame which covered the whole upper half of his person, on which were hung a cluster of silver flagons and dishes, each set in a bed of flowers. With this extraordinary burden, the legs, which alone were seen, would join in the dance,—rather clumsily, as might be expected, but much to the mirth of the spectators,—while the strange pile above floated and flaunted about with an air of heavy decorum, that added not a little to the general amusement. We are introduced to the prose of this old custom, when we are informed that the silver articles were regularly lent out for the purpose at so much an hour by pawn-brokers, and that one set would serve for a succession of groups of milk-maids during the day. In Vauxhall, there used to be a picture representing the May-day dance of the London milk-maids: from an engraving of it the accompanying cut is taken. It will be observed that the scene includes one or two chimney-sweeps as side figures.

In Scotland there are few relics of the old May-day observances—we might rather say none, beyond a lingering propensity in the young of the female sex to go out at an early hour, and wash their faces with dew. At Edinburgh this custom is kept up with considerable vigour, the favourite scene of the lavation being Arthur's

Seat. On a fine May morning, the appearance of so many gay groups perambulating the hill sides and the intermediate valleys, searching for dew, and rousing the echoes with their harmless mirth, has an indescribably cheerful effect.

The fond imaginings which we entertain regarding the 1st of May—alas! so often disappointed—are beautifully embodied in a short Latin lyric of George Buchanan, which the late Archdeacon Wrangham thus rendered in English:

THE FIRST OF MAY

'Hail! sacred thou to sacred joy,
To mirth and wine, sweet first of May!
To sports, which no grave cares alloy,

The sprightly dance, the festive play!

Hail! thou of ever circling time,
That gracest still the ceaseless flow!
Bright blossom of the season's prime

Age, hastening on to winter's snow!

When first young Spring his angel face
On earth unveiled, and years of gold
Gilt with pure ray man's guileless race,

By law's stern terrors uncontrolled:

Such was the soft and genial breeze,
Mild Zephyr breathed on all around;
With grateful glee, to airs like these

Yielded its wealth th' unlaboured ground.

So fresh, so fragrant is the gale,
Which o'er the islands of the blest
Sweeps; where nor aches the limbs assail,

Nor age's peevish pains infest.

Where thy hushed groves, Elysium, sleep,
Such winds with whispered murmurs blow;
So where dull Lethe's waters creep,

They heave, scarce heave the cypress-bough.

And such when heaven, with penal flame,
Shall purge the globe, that golden day

Restoring, o'er man's brightened frame

Haply such gale again shall play.

Hail, thou, the fleet year's pride and prime!

Hail! day which Fame should bid to bloom!

Hail! image of primeval time!

Hail! sample of a world to come!

MAY-POLES: ENGLISH AND FOREIGN

One of the London parishes takes its distinctive name from the May-pole which in olden times overtopped its steeple. The parish is that of St. Andrew Undershaft, and its May-pole is celebrated by the father of English poetry, Geoffrey Chaucer, who speaks of an empty braggart:--

'Right well aloft, and high ye beare your head,

As ye would beare the great shaft of Cornhill.'

Stow, who is buried in this church, tells us that in his time the shaft was set up 'every year, on May-day in the morning,' by the exulting Londoners, 'in the midst of the street before the south door of the said church; which shaft, when it was set on end, and fixed in the ground, was higher than the church steeple.' During the rest of the year this pole was hung upon iron hooks above the doors of the neighbouring houses, and immediately beneath the projecting penthouses which kept the rain from their doors. It was destroyed in a fit of Puritanism in the third year of Edward VI, after a sermon preached at St. Paul's Cross against May games, when the inhabitants of these houses 'sawed it in pieces, everie man taking for his share as much as had layne over his doore and stall, the length of his house, and they of the alley divided amongst them so much as had lain over their alley gate.'

The earliest representation of an English May-pole is that published in the variorum Shakspeare, and depicted on a window at Betley, in Staffordshire, then the property of Mr. Tollett, and which he was disposed to think as old as the time of Henry VIII. The pole is planted in a mound of earth, and has affixed to it St. George's reel-cross banner, and a white pennon or streamer with a forked end. The shaft of the pole is painted in a diagonal line of black colour, upon a yellow ground, a characteristic decoration of all these ancient May-poles, as alluded to by Shakspeare in his *Midsummer Night's Dream*, where it gives point to Hermia's allusion to her rival Helena as a 'painted May-pole.'

The fifth volume of Halliwell's folio edition of Shakspeare has a curious coloured frontispiece of a May-pole, painted in continuous vertical stripes of white, red, and blue, which stands in the centre of the village of Welford, in Gloucestershire, about

five miles from Stratford-on-Avon. It may be an exact copy and legitimate successor of one standing there in the days when the bard himself visited the village. It is of great height, and is planted in the centre of a raised mound, to which there is an ascent by three stone steps: on this mound probably the dancers performed their gyrations. Stubbes, in his *Anatomie of Abuses*, 1584, speaks of May-poles 'covered all over with flowers and hearbes, bounde rounde aboute with stringes, from the top to the bottom, and some tyme painted with variable colours.' The London citizen, Machyn, in his *Diary*, 1552, tells of one brought at that time into the parish of Fenchurch; 'a goodly May-pole as you have seene; it was painted Whyte and green.'

In the illuminations which decorate the manuscript 'Hours' once used by Anne of Brittany and now preserved in the *Bibliothèque Royale* at Paris, and which are believed to have been painted about 1499, the month of May is illustrated by figures bearing flower-garlands, and behind them the curious May-pole here copied, which is also decorated by colours on the shaft, and ornamented by garlands arranged on hoops, from which hang small gilded pendants. The pole is planted on a triple grass-covered mound, embanked and strengthened by timber-work.

That this custom of painting and decorating the May-pole was very general until a comparatively recent period, is easy of proof. A Dutch picture, bearing date 1625, furnishes our third specimen; here the pole is surmounted by a flower-pot containing a tree, stuck all round with gaily-coloured flags; three hoops with garlands are suspended below it, from which hang gilded balls, after the fashion of the pendent decorations of the older French example. The shaft of the pole is painted white and blue.

London boasted several May-poles before the days of Puritanism. Many parishes vied with each other in the height and adornment of their own. One famed pole stood in Basing-lane, near St. Paul's Cathedral, and was in the time of Stow kept in the hostelry called Gerard's Hall. 'In the high-roofed hall of this house,' says he, 'sometime stood a large fir pole, which reached to the roof thereof,—a pole of forty feet long, and fifteen inches about, fabled to be the justing staff of Gerard the Giant.' A carved wooden figure of this giant, pole in hand, stood over the gate of this old inn, until March 1852, when the whole building was demolished for city improvements.

The most renowned London May-pole, and the latest in existence, was that erected in the Strand, immediately after the Restoration. Its history is altogether curious. The Parliament of 1644 had ordained that 'all and singular May-poles that are or shall be erected, shall be taken down,' and had enforced their decree by penalties that effectually carried out their gloomy desires. When the populace gave again vent to their May-day jollity in 1661, they determined on planting the tallest of these poles in the most conspicuous part of the Strand, bringing it in triumph, with drums beating, flags flying, and music playing, from Scotland Yard to

the opening of Little Drury Lane, opposite Somerset House, where it was erected, and which lane was after termed 'May-pole Alley' in consequence. 'That stately cedar erected in the Strand, 134 feet high,' as it is glowingly termed by a contemporary author, was considered as a type of 'golden days' about to return with the Stuarts. It was raised by seamen, expressly sent for the purpose by the Duke of York, and decorated with three gilt crowns and other enrichments. It is frequently alluded to by authors. Pope wrote--

'Where the tall May-pole once o'erlooked the Strand.'

Our cut, exhibiting its features a short while before its demolition, is a portion of a long print by Vertue representing the procession of the members of both Houses of Parliament to St. Paul's Cathedral to render thanks for the Peace of Utrecht, July 7th, 1713. On this occasion the London charity children were ranged on scaffolds, erected on the north side of the Strand, and the cut represents a portion of one of these scaffolds, terminating at the opening to Little Drury Lane, and including the pole, which is surmounted by a globe, and has a long streamer floating beneath it. Four years after-wards, this famed pole, having grown old and decayed, was taken down. Sir Isaac Newton arranged for its purchase with the parish, and it was carried to Wanstead, in Essex, and used as a support to the great telescope (124 feet in length), which had been presented to the Royal Society by the French astronomer, M. Hugon. Its celebrity rendered its memory to be popularly preserved longer than falls to the lot of such relics of old London, and an anonymous author, in the year 1800, humorously asks:--

'What's not destroy'd by Time's relentless hand?

Where's Troy?—and where's the May-pole in the Strand?'

Scattered in some of the more remote English villages are a few of the old May-poles. One still does duty as the supporter of a weathercock in the churchyard at Pendleton, Manchester; others might be cited, serving more ignoble uses than they were originally intended for. The custom of dressing them with May garlands, and dancing around them, has departed from utilitarian England, and the jollity of old country customs given way to the ceaseless labouring monotony of commercial town life. The same thing occurs abroad as at home, except in lonely districts as yet unbroken by railways, and our concluding illustration is derived from such a locality. Between Munich and Salzburg are many quiet villages, each rejoicing in its May-pole; that we have selected for engraving is in the middle of the little village of St. Egydien, near Salzburg. It is encircled by garlands, and crowned with a May-bush and flags. Beneath the garlands are figures dressed in the ordinary peasant costume, as if ascending the pole; they are large wooden dolls, dressed in linen and cloth clothing, and nailed by hands and knees to the pole. It is the custom here to place such figures, as well as birds, stags, &c., up the poles. In one instance a stag-hunt is so represented. The pole thus decorated remains to adorn the village green, until a renovation of these decorations takes

place on the yearly May festival.

MAY, AS CELEBRATED IN OLD ENGLISH POETRY

Our mediaeval forefathers seem to have cherished a deep admiration for nature in all her forms; they loved the beauty of her flowers, and the song of her birds, and, whenever they could, they made their dwellings among her most picturesque and pleasant scenery. May was their favourite month in the year, not only because it was the time at which all nature seemed to spring into new life, but because a host of superstitions, dating from remote antiquity, were attached to it, and had given rise to many popular festivals and observances. The poets especially loved to dwell on the charms of the month of May. 'In the season of April and May,' says the minstrel who sang the history of the Fitz-Warines, 'when fields and plants become green again, and everything living recovers virtue, beauty, and force, hills and vales resound with the sweet songs of birds, and the hearts of all people, for the beauty of the weather and the season, rise up and gladden themselves.' The month of May is celebrated in the earliest attempts at English lyric poetry (Wright's Specimens of Lyric Poetry of the Reign of Edward 1, p. 45), as the season when 'it is pleasant at daybreak,'--

'In May hit murgeth when hit dawes;'

and

'Blosmes bredeth on the bowes.'

The 'Romance of Kyng Alisaunder,' as old, apparently, as the beginning of the fourteenth century, similarly speaks of the pleasantness of May (for it must be kept in mind that the old meaning of the word merry was pleasant)--

'Mery time it is in May;
The foules syngeth her lay;
The knighttes loveth the tornay;

Maydens so dauncen and thay play.'

(l. 5,210, in Weber.)

And the same poet alludes in another place (l. 2,547) to the melody of the birds--

'In tyme of May, the nyghtyngale
In wode makith miry gale (pleasant melody);
So doth the foules grete and smale,

Som on hulle, som on dale.'

Much in the same tone is the 'merry' month celebrated in the celebrated 'Romance of the Rose,' which we will quote in the translation made by our own poet

Chaucer. After alluding to the pleasure and joy which seemed to pervade all nature, after its recovery from the rigours of winter, now that May had brought in the summer season, the poet goes on to say that--

'—than bycometh the ground so proude,
 That it wole have a newe shroude,
 And makith so quaynt his robe and faire,
 That it had hewes an hundred payre
 Of gras and flouris, ynde (blue) and pers (grey),
 And many hewes ful dyvers:
 That is the robe I mene, iwis (truly),
 Through which the ground to preisen is.
 The briddes, that haven lefte her song,
 While thei han suffrid cold so strong
 In weeres gryl and derk to sight,
 Ben in May for the sonne bright
 So glade, that they shewe in syngyng
 That in her hertis is such lykyng (pleasure),
 That they mote syngen and be light.
 Than doth the nyghtyngale hir myght
 To make noyse and syngen blythe,
 Than is blisful many sithe (times)
 The chelaundre (goldfinch) and the papyngay
 Than young folk entenden ay
 For to ben gay and amorous;
 The tyme is than so saverous.
 Hard is his hart that loveth nought
 In May, whan al this mirth is wrought;
 Whan he may on these braunches here

The smale briddes syngen clere.'

The whole spirit of the poetry of mediaeval England is embodied in the writings of Chaucer, and it is no wonder if we often find him singing the praises of May. The daisy, in Chaucer's estimate, was the prettiest flower in that engaging month—

'How have I thanne suche a condition,
 That of al the floures in the mede
 Thanne love I most these floures white and redo,
 Suche as men callen daysyes in our tonne.
 To hem have I so grete affeccioun,
 As I seyde erst, whanne comen is the May,
 That in my bed ther daweth (dawns) me no day
 That I nam (am not) uppe and walkyng in the merle,
 To seen this floure ayein (against) the sunne sprede
 Whan it up-ryseth erly by the morwe;

That blisful sight softeneth al my sorwe.'

Prologue to Legend of Goode Women.

Chaucer more than once introduces the feathered minstrels welcoming and worshipping the month of May; as, for an instance, in his 'Court of Love,' where robin redbreast is introduced at the 'lectern,' chaunting his devotions—

"Hail now," quoth he, "o fresh sason of May,
Our moneth glad that singen on the spray!
Hail to the floures, red, and white, and blewe,

Which by their vertue maketh our lust newe I"

And so again in 'The Cuckow and the Nightingale,' when the poet sought the fields and groves on a May morning—

'There sat I downe among the faire floures,
And sawe the birdes trippe out of hir boures,
There as they rested hem alle the night;
They were so joyful of the dayes light,

They gan of May for to done honoures.'

It is the season which puts in motion people's hearts and spirits, and makes them active with life. 'For,' as we are told in the same poem—

'—every true gentle herte free,
That with him is, or thinketh for to be,
Againe May now shal have some stering (stirring)
Or to joye, or elles to some mourning,
In no season so muche, as thinketh me.
For whan they may here the birdes singe,
And see the floures and the leaves springe,
That bringeth into hertes remembraunce
A manner ease, medled (mixed) with grevaunce,

And lustie thoughtes full of grete longinge.'

May, in fact, was the season which was to last for ever in heaven, according to the idea expressed in the inscription on the gate of Chaucer's happy 'park'--

'Through me men gon into the blisful place
Of hertes, hele and dedly, woundes cure;
Through me men gon into the welle of grace,

There grene and lusty May shal ever endure.

Chaucer's Assembly of Foules

In the 'Court of Love,' when the birds have concluded their devotional service in honour of the month, they separate to gather flowers and branches, and weave them into garlands--

'Thus sange they alle the service of the feste,
And that was done right early, to my dome (as I judged);
And forth goeth al the court, both moste and leste,
To feche the floures freshe, and braunche, and biome;
And namely (especially) hawthorn brought both page and grome,
With freshe garlandes party blew and white;
And than rejoysen in their grete delight,
Eek eche at other threw the floures bright,

The primerose, the violete, and the gold' (the marigold).

The practice of going into the woods to gather flowers and green boughs, and make them into garlands on May morning, is hardly yet quite obsolete, and it is often mentioned by the other old poets, as well as by Chaucer. At the period when we learn more of the domestic manners of our kings and queens, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, we find even royalty following the same custom, and rambling in the fields and woods at daybreak to fetch home 'the May.' So in Chaucer's 'Knightes Tale,' it was on a May morning that--

'Arcite, that is in the court ryal
With Theseus, his squyer principal,
Is risen, and loketh on the mery day.
And for to doon his observance to May,
Remembryng of the poynt of his desire,
He on his courser, stertyng as the fire,
Is riden into feeldes him to pleye,
Out of the court, were it a mile or tweye.
And to the grove, of which that I yow tolde,
By aventure his wey he gan to holde,
To make him a garland of the greves,
Were it of woodewynde or hawthorn leves;

And lowde he song agens the sonne scheene.'

MAY-DAY CAROL

Two or three years ago we obtained the following song or carol from the mouths of several parties of little girls in the parish of Debden, in Essex, who on May morning go about from house to house, carrying garlands of different sizes, some large, with a doll dressed in white in the middle, which no doubt represents what was once the Virgin Mary. All who sing it, do so with various readings, or rather

with corruptions, and it was only by comparing a certain number of these different versions, that we could make it out as intelligible as it appears in this text:

'I, been a rambling all this night,
And sometime of this day;
And now returning back again,

I brought you a garland gay.

A garland gay I brought you here,
And at your door I stand;
'Tis nothing but a sprout, but 'tis well budded out,

The works of our Lord's hand.

So dear, so dear as Christ lov'd us,
And for our sins was slain,
Christ bids us turn from wickedness,

And turn to the Lord again.'

Sometimes a sort of refrain is sung after each verse, in the following words:

'Why don't you do as we have done,
The very first day of May;
And from my parents I have come,

And would no longer stay.'

This is evidently a very old ballad, dating probably from as far back as the time of Elizabeth, when, according to the puritanical moralists, it was the custom for the youths of both sexes to go into the fields and woods on May eve, and remain out all night, returning early in the morning with green branches and garlands of flowers. The doll representing the Virgin Mary perhaps refers us back to a still older period. The puritans have evidently left their mark upon it, and their influence is still more visible in a longer version of it, preserved in a neighbouring parish, that of Hitchin, in Hertfordshire, which was communicated to Hone's Every Day Book, as sung in 1823 by the men in that parish. This also was, we believe, the case a few years ago in Debenham parish, where the girls have only taken it up at a comparatively recent period. The following is the Hitchin version:

'Remember us poor Mayers all,
And thus we do begin
To lead our lives in righteousness,

Or else we die in sin.

We have been rambling all this night,



The Maypole

The origins of the maypole hark back to ancient times when tree spirits were worshiped and indeed the first maypoles were tall slender trees, usually birch, which had their branches lopped off, leaving just a few at the top to be adorned with garlands and blossom: a far cry from the more elaborate designs of today.

The maypole itself is a phallic symbol representing the planting of the god's phallus into the mother earth's womb, there by illustrating the bringing forth of new life. The sexual symbolism of the maypole and all the immoral revelry that went along with it led the Puritans to out-law the maypole custom in 1644. However, this prohibition was soon repealed after the restoration of Charles II in 1660. Many towns and parishes erected permanent maypoles in celebration, some boasting 80 or 90 feet! These permanent poles were left to stand throughout the year but only decorated and danced around on May Day.

Dancing around the maypole was once a very merry and frivolous affair, yet today's maypole dancing with its colourful ribbons is a relatively modern dance, only dating back to the nineteenth century. However, this new adaptation is now accepted as a very important aspect of the maypole dance. By taking two ribbons and weaving them together the dancers make a new element, thus two makes three representing the sexual union and the offspring.

The village of Sturminster Marshal still retains its permanent maypole. A commemorative plaque beside it reads:

"In the year of 1101, the Lord of the Manor the Earl of Pembroke, granted permission for a fare to be held on this site and it is probable that the first maypole was erected at the time. Known restorations took place in year 1669, 1867 and 1897. The present maypole follows the design of the 1897 pole and stands thirty-five foot high with a static ring four foot in diameter fixed five foot from the top. A new innovation is the weathervane in the shape of a water rat - the village emblem. The pole weighs three and a half tons. The 1986 restoration was made possible by subscriptions from residents of the village, local organisations and firms. On the adjacent green a replica of the village stocks last known to have been used in 1861 has been erected."

And almost all this day,
And now returned back again,

We have brought you a branch of May.

A branch of May we have brought you,
And at your door it stands;
It is but a sprout, but it's well budded out

By the work of our Lord's hands.

The hedges and trees they are so green,
As green as any leek,
Our Heavenly Father he watered them

With heavenly dew so sweet.

The heavenly gates are open wide,
Our paths are beaten plain,
And, if a man be not too far gone,

He may return again.

The life of man is but a span,
It flourishes like a flower;
We are here to-day, and gone to-morrow,

And we are dead in one hour.

The moon shines bright, and the stars give a light,
A little before it is day;
So God bless you all, both great and small,

And send you a joyful May!

The same song is sung in some other parishes in the neighbourhood of Debenham, with further variations, which show us, in a curious and interesting manner, the changes which such popular records undergo in passing from one generation to another. At Thaxted, the girls wave branches before the doors of the inhabit-ants, but they seem to have forgotten the song altogether."

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Below: local school children dance around the Maypole at Sturminster Marshal in 2004

Dorset Folklorist, John Symonds Udal wrote in his book 'Dorsetshire Folklore' published in 1922 about May Day customs and traditions:

"It was anciently the custom for all ranks of people to go out a-Maying early on the first of May" says Brand; but I do not think that there exist now in Dorsetshire many traces of the old merry dances and games, such as the Maypole dance, the Morris dancers, the milkmaids, the chimney-sweeps, the maidens' garland or flower dances and processions, which used to be so prevalent in many parts of England on May Day.

Flower and Maypole Dance, Chardstock.— *In some parts of Dorsetshire, however, some few such observances still take place. For instance, in the parish of Chardstock, on the Somerset and Devon border, according to the Dorset County Chronicle in May, 1884, the children of the parish brought round garlands as usual on May Day; in the afternoon upwards of seventy of them sat down to a feast at which the local squire, the vicar, and other gentlemen and ladies were present. "Dancing round the Maypole concluded the keeping up of this old English custom"*

Crowning the May Queen and Maypole Dance (Bridport).— *The Dorset County Chronicle, in June, 1918, gives a very recent instance of this as occurring in the West Dorset town of Bridport:—*

"On Thursday the girls of the National Schools had their annual festival of crowning the May Queen and dancing round the Maypole. There was a very good attendance of the general public, the ceremony taking place in the school-yard. Favoured with fine weather, the scene was a very picturesque one, and the proceedings were watched with the greatest interest and pleasure. The children, as is their custom, were dressed in white, and with their Queen (Vera Meech), who is elected by the votes of her schoolmates, they paraded the Rope Walks, St. Michael's Lane, and Gundry Lane, and returned to the playground. Here the Maypole was set up and the Queen was then enthroned. She recited a verse of Tennyson's May Queen, and then the Rector 'crowned' her with a wreath of flowers. Some very pretty Maypole dances were then gone through, and some nicely rendered songs gave variety to the programme, while at the close a collection, which realized £4, was made to defray the cost of a new set of strings for the Maypole."

I have since been told that this is not a genuine folk-lore survival, but rather a sham revival, having been introduced from Whitelands College by the National Society of School teachers, taught by Ruskin. The recitation of Tennyson's May

Queen would seem to confirm this ; but even if this be so, it is a decided improvement upon the usual School Board methods of recent years, which tend to destroy all traces of local folk-lore in the young people of the present age.

Maypole: Cattistock. — *There is an interesting reference in H. N. Cox's serial History of Cattistock, published in the Southern Times in 1886, to the " old custom of the Maypole ", which would appear to have been regularly kept up in that village until 1835. Mr. Cox alludes to a decree of Parliament in 1644, which ordered every Maypole in England and Wales to be taken down and none afterwards to be erected. Presumably Cattistock obeyed the mandate, at all events until the Restoration. Mr. Cox goes on to say that probably as time passed on the Maypole festivities were bereft of many of their ancient customs, but even at the last there was an immense assemblage of people, and the merry dance around the gaily decked pole with its thousands of May flowers was indulged in by all parties. He remembers on one occasion the Maypole being "set up " in the open space near to the main entrance to the church and rectory, but that generally it was opposite " The Fox ", no doubt one of the principal hostelrys in the village. Cattistock is still to this day an important hunting centre. Mr. Cox is of opinion that the custom was permitted to die out, not because the people disapproved of it, but that the expense of getting good music for the dance was not met by the subscriptions.*

Maypole: Cerne Abbas. — *Dr. Colcy March, F.S.A., in his paper on " The Giant and the Maypole of Cerne " in the Dorset Field Club's Proceedings (1901), vol. xxii, p. 105, speaks of the ordinance of the Long Parliament in April, 1644, whereby all maypoles were to be taken down and removed by the constables, churchwardens, and other parish officers; but it met with no little resistance. (Dr. March states, p. 105 (n.), that the Cerne maypole was destroyed in 1635) After the advent of Charles II the Maypole was set up again, and had a long life. Dr. March quotes from an old sexton at Cerne, who well remembered it:—*

"It was made," he said," every year from a fir-bole, and was raised in a night. It was erected in the ring just above the Giant. It was decorated, and the villagers went up the hill and danced round the pole on the 1st of May."

This hill was Trendle Hill, situated about half a mile from the town, upon the steep southern declivity of which the famous figure of the giant was cut in the chalk.

According to authorities cited by Dr. March, "the festival of the maypole" was not unattended by scenes that "called forth ample invective". Philip Stubbes, in his Anatomic of Abuses, 1583, refers to a custom when "hundreds of men, women, and children go off to the woods and groves and spend all the night in pastimes, and in the morning they would return with birche boughes and branches of trees to deck their assembles withal. And they bring home with great veneration the Maie-pole, their stinking idol rather, covered all over with flowers and herbes, and then fall they to leaping and dancing about it, as the heathen people did. I have

heard it credibly reported by men of great gravity that, of an hundred maides going to the wood, there have scarcely the third part of them returned home again as they went."

Maypole: *Shillingston.*—William Barnes in his *Fore-say* (ante) speaks of this decline in the old maypole customs. He says: "Dorset formerly had its maypoles, but Shillingston, clustering round its softly rising knap, may now be the only Dorset village which keeps up the tall token of a merry May Day."

In the Life of William Barnes, by his daughter, Mrs. Lucy E. Baxter, published in 1887 under the pseudonym of "Leader Scott", she gives (p. 150) a poem of her father's, hitherto unpublished, called "Our Early Landscape",—in which the poet alludes to the maypole at Shillingston in the following lines :—

*"And Shillingston, that on her height
Shows up her tower to op'ning day,
And high-shot Maypole, yearly dight
With flow'ry wreaths of merry May."*

Stocking of Poundbury Field, *Dorchester.* — William Barnes in the above *Fore-say* also refers to the annual stocking of Poundbury Field, near Dorchester, on May Day under the head of customs at set times or given days of the year. The field is now enclosed, but "Dorchester folk were wont in olden time, it is said, to go forth to its flowery and airy sward a-maying and to drink syllybub of fresh milk".

Flower Service: *Bridport.* — The town of Bridport in West Dorset has for many years been prominent in keeping up an old flower custom on May Sunday—the first Sunday in May. The *Bridport News* in May, 1885, gave an interesting account of the ceremony, where on "May Sunday" the children, to the number of 312, assembled at the schools in Gundry Lane, and having been duly marshalled in procession, marched to the parish church, carrying flowers. They came up South Street as far as the old castle, and going down the east side of the street crossed again by the rectory, and entered the church by the west door, occupying seats in the nave, which were given up to them for the occasion by the parishioners who generally used them. The children were accompanied by their superintendent and also by their teachers. Divine service followed, and in the afternoon the usual children's service was held. The bells were rung spiritedly at intervals during the day and a flag was hoisted, as usual, on the church tower.

Again, in May, 1890, the *Bridport News* recorded that, in accordance with the usual custom, the first Sunday in May was kept by the scholars of the Bridport Parish Church Sunday Schools by the usual special and joyous services. Shortly after 7 a.m. the bells of the parish church (St. Mary's) pealed forth to herald in the school anniversary, and at 8 o'clock there was a full choral celebration of the Holy Communion. In his sermon the Rector, the Rev. E. J. B. Henslowe, alluded to the

origin of May Sunday celebrations in Bridport, and to the fact that it was an institution not celebrated to his knowledge in any other town, but was peculiar to Bridport. He said that years ago there was no proper school, but classes were held by different people in their own houses'; these classes used to meet once a year, and have a procession and go to church.

In the afternoon the usual flower service was held. The scholars formed in procession and again marched to the church. The rector officiated. The service commenced with a hymn, and then the scholars passed up to the chancel steps and presented their floral offerings. While another hymn was being sung flowers were presented by members of the congregation. The service was then proceeded with. The flowers were afterwards packed and forwarded to London for some of the hospitals. Again, in May, 1905, the Bridport News contributed a long leading article on the subject which it styled " May Sunday : A Link with the Past". It dealt fully with the origin of the present flower-custom in Bridport, and referred to the institution of Sunday Schools in Bridport in connexion with St. Mary's Church in 1788. At that time the procession formed almost a complete "perambulation" of the parish boundaries, and many visitors would come in from the country "to see the children walk". The writer of the article thinks that this " walking " may have been but a survival of a much older custom — that of "beating the bounds " — which prevailed in many parishes at Rogation-tide ; and that "May Sunday" occurring near the same time of the year the one custom had at the end of the eighteenth century merged into the other. As we have seen, the custom of "walking" still continues, but only to a very limited extent."

Extract taken from the *Chambers Book of Days* May 1st 1864, details the traditions of May Day.

"MAY DAY

The outbreak into beauty which Nature makes at the end of April and beginning of May excites so joyful and admiring a feeling in the human breast, that there is no wonder the event should have at all times been celebrated in some way. The first emotion is a desire to seize some part of that profusion of flower and blossom which spreads around us, to set it up in decorative fashion, pay it a sort of homage, and let the pleasure it excites find expression in dance and song. A mad happiness goes abroad over the earth, that Nature, long dead and cold, lives and smiles again. Doubtless there is mingled with this, too, in bosoms of any reflection, a grateful sense of the Divine goodness, which makes the promise of seasons so stable and so sure.

Amongst the Romans, the feeling of the time found vent in their Floralia, or Floral Games, which began on the 28th of April, and lasted a few days. Nations taking more or less their origin from Rome have settled upon the 1st of May as the special time for fetes of the same kind. With ancients and moderns alike it was

one instinctive rush to the fields, to revel in the bloom which was newly presented on the meadows and the trees; the more city-pent the population, the more eager apparently the desire to get among the flowers, and bring away samples of them; the more sordidly drudging the life, the more hearty the relish for this one day of communion with things pure and beautiful. Among the barbarous Celtic populations of Europe, there was a heathen festival on the same day, but it does not seem to have been connected with flowers. It was called Beltein, and found expression in the kindling of fires on hill tops by night. Amongst the peasantry of Ireland, of the Isle of Man, and of the Scottish Highlands, such doings were kept up till within the recollection of living people. We can see no identity of character in the two festivals; but the subject is an obscure one, and we must not speak on this point with too much confidence.

In England we have to go back several generations to find the observances of May-day in their fullest development. In the sixteenth century it was still customary for the middle and humbler classes to go forth at an early hour of the morning, in order to gather flowers and hawthorn branches, which they brought home about sunrise, with accompaniments of horn and tabor, and all possible signs of joy and merriment. With these spoils they would decorate every door and window in the village. By a natural transition of ideas, they gave to the hawthorn bloom the name of the May; they called this ceremony 'the bringing home the May;' they spoke of the expedition to the woods as 'going a-Maying.' The fairest maid of the village was crowned with flowers, as the 'Queen of the May;' the lads and lasses met, danced and sang together, with a freedom which we would fain think of as bespeaking comparative innocence as well as simplicity.

In a somewhat earlier age, ladies and gentlemen were accustomed to join in the Maying festivities. Even the king and queen condescended to mingle on this occasion with their subjects. In Chaucer's Court of Love, we read that early on May-day 'Forth goeth all the court, both most and least, to fetch the flowers fresh.' And we know, as one illustrative fact, that, in the reign of Henry VIII the heads of the corporation of London went out into the high grounds of Kent to gather the May, the king and his queen, Catherine of Arragon, coming from their palace of Greenwich, and meeting these respected dignitaries on Shooter's Hill. Such festal doings we cannot look back upon without a regret that they are no more. They give us the notion that our ancestors, while wanting many advantages which an advanced civilization has given to us, were freer from monotonous drudgeries, and more open to pleasurable impressions from outward nature. They seem somehow to have been more ready than we to allow themselves to be happy, and to have often been merrier upon little than we can be upon much.

The contemporary poets are full of joyous references to the May festivities. How fresh and sparkling is Spenser's description of the going out for the May:

'Siker this morrow, no longer ago,
I saw a shole of shepherds outgo

With singing, and shouting, and jolly cheer;
 Before them yode a lusty Tabrere,
 That to the many a horn-pipe play'd,
 Where to they dance each one with his maid.
 To see these folks make such jouissance,
 Made my heart after the pipe to dance.
 Then to the greenwood they speeden them all,
 To fetchen home May with their musical:
 And home they bring him in a royal throne
 Crowned as king; and his queen attone
 Was Lady Flora, on whom did attend
 A fair flock of fairies, and a fresh bend
 Of lovely nymphs—O that I were there

To helpen the ladies their May-bush to bear!

Shepherd's Calendar, Eclogue 5.

Herrick, of course, could never have overlooked a custom so full of a living poetry.
 'Come, my Corinna,' says he,

'----- Come, and coming mark
 flow each field turns a street, and each street a park,
 Made green and trimmed with trees: see how
 Devotion gives each house a bough
 Or branch; each porch, each door, ere this
 An ark, a tabernacle is

Made up of white-thorn neatly interwove.

'A deal of youth ere this is come
 Back, and with white-thorn laden home.
 Some have dispatched their cakes and cream,

Before that we have left to dream.'

Not content with a garlanding of their brows, of their doors and windows, these merry people of the old days had in every town, or considerable district of a town, and in every village, a fixed pole, as high as the mast of a vessel of a hundred tons, on which each May morning they suspended wreaths of flowers, and round which they danced in rings pretty nearly the whole day.

Raising the May Pole The May-pole, as it was called, had its place equally with the parish church or the parish stocks; or, if anywhere one was wanting, the people selected a suitable tree, fashioned it, brought it in triumphantly, and erected it in the proper place, there from year to year to remain. The Puritans—those most respectable people, always so unpleasantly shown as the enemies of mirth and

good humour—caused May-poles to be uprooted, and a stop put to all their jollities; but after the Restoration they rites re-commenced. Now, alas! in the course of were everywhere re-erected, and the appropriate the mere gradual change of manners, the May-pole has again vanished. They must now be pretty old people who remember ever seeing one.

Washington Irving, who visited England early in this century, records in his Sketch Book, that he had seen one:

'I shall never,' he says, 'forget the delight I felt on first seeing a May-pole. It was on the banks of the Dee, close by the picturesque old bridge that stretches across the river from the quaint little city of Chester. I had already been carried back into former days by the antiquities of that venerable place, the examination of which is equal to turning over the pages of a black-letter volume, or gazing on the pictures in Froissart. The May-pole on the margin of that poetic stream completed the illusion. My fancy adorned it with wreaths of flowers, and peopled the green bank with all the dancing revelry of May-day. The mere sight of this May-pole gave a glow to my feelings, and spread a charm over the country for the rest of the day; and as I traversed a part of the fair plains of Cheshire, and the beautiful borders of Wales, and looked from among swelling hills down a long green valley, through which "the Deva wound its wizard stream," my imagination turned all into a perfect Arcadia. I value every custom that tends to infuse poetical feeling into the common people, and to sweeten and soften the rudeness of rustic manners, without destroying their simplicity.

Indeed, it is to the decline of this happy simplicity that the decline of this custom may be traced; and the rural dance on the green, and the homely May-day pageant, have gradually disappeared, in proportion as the peasantry have become expensive and artificial in their pleasures, and too knowing for simple enjoyment. Some attempts, indeed, have been made of late years by men of both taste and learning to rally back the popular feeling to these standards of primitive simplicity; but the time has gone by—the feeling has become chilled by habits of gain and traffic --the country apes the manners and amusements of the town, and little is heard of May-day at present, except from the lamentations of authors, who sigh after it from among the brick walls of the city.'

The custom of having a Queen of the May, or May Queen, looks like a relic of the heathen celebration of the day: this flower-crowned maid appears as a living representative of the goddess Flora, whom the Romans worshipped on this day. Be it observed, the May Queen did not join in the revelries of her subjects. She was placed in a sort of bower or arbour, near the May-pole, there to sit in pretty state, an object of admiration to the whole village. She herself was half covered with flowers, and her shrine was wholly composed of them. It must have been rather a dull office, but doubtless to the female heart had its compensations. In our country, the enthronization of the May Queen has been longer obsolete than even the May-pole; but it will be found that the custom still survives in France. The only

MONSTRO BIZARRO

According to a recent book by David Clarke, titled *Britain's X-traordinary Files*, newly discovered documents reveal that the National History Museum (NHM) in London planned to shoot Scotland's Loch Ness Monster and display its carcass in England! Evidence is based on a letter, from March 1934, in which a NHM official stated that the museum was urging hunters to set aside "humanitarian considerations," shoot the creature on sight and send "the carcass to us in cold storage." If a body could not be sent, the writer added, then "a flipper, a jaw or a tooth would be very welcome." Nessie was already becoming an important symbol for Scottish Nationalists, who rallied for its protection. The same year, Edinburgh's Royal Scottish Museum (RSM) staked its own claim by writing in a letter, "The museum urges strongly that the RSM have the reversionary rights to the 'Monster' if and when its corpse should become available."

LYLE BLACKBURN

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MORE MONSTRO BIZARRO AT RUE-MORGUE.COM

MONSTRO BIZARRO

Plenty of photos of alleged Bigfoot tracks have surfaced, but never a suspected troll print. Recently, a Norwegian resident who calls himself "Findi" sent a striking shot – clearly showing a huge, human-like footprint he claims was found in a remote part of Norway – to the Bigfoot Evidence website. Considering Norway isn't known for hairy man-apes, could it be the mark of one of the towering ogres prominent in Scandinavian folklore, or just the result of one too many viewings of *Troll Hunter*?

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In her latest work, *Real Wolfmen: True Encounters in Modern America* (Tarcher Books), prolific author and cryptid researcher Linda S. Godfrey discusses the creepy phenomenon of "real werewolf" sightings. Since 1991, she has chronicled numerous chilling accounts that suggest that some type of humanoid wolf-like creature stalks the backwoods of America.

LYLE BLACKBURN

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MONSTRO BIZARRO

Strange aquatic creatures continue to be reported all around the world. One of the more obscure beasts, known as "Pepie," recently grabbed a sliver of spotlight as it became the subject of a book by authors Chad Lewis and Noah Voss. Titled *Pepie, The Lake Monster of the Mississippi River*, it chronicles the history and modern sightings of an unidentified creature said to dwell in Lake Pepin, a 22-mile-long body of water located along the Mississippi River between Minnesota and Wisconsin. Newspaper accounts go back to 1867, when river rafters reported seeing a huge creature in the water, while later accounts from the Wabasha County Sentinel describe "a marine monster between the size of an elephant and rhinoceros."

LYLE BLACKBURN

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Ring Around the Rosie: Metafolklore, Rhyme and Reason | Folklife Today

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Reason

July 24, 2014 by Stephen Winick



Kate Greenaway's *Mother Goose or the Old Nursery Rhymes* (1881) was the first publication of "Ring Around the Rosie" in English. Her illustration was published in 1881 and is therefore in the public domain.

A recent blog post at Londonist describes "Five London Nursery Rhymes Depicting Death and Ruin." The rhymes in question have diverse origins and histories, but what seems incontrovertible from James FitzGerald's work is that they describe dark and portentous matters from English history.

Or do they? Looking closely at these rhymes, and at scholarship surrounding them, suggests other interpretations. I'll discuss one of the rhymes in particular, because it tells us interesting things about folklore and our ideas about folklore: "Ring Around the Rosie," or "Ring-a-Ring-a-Roses," as it's sometimes known.

FitzGerald's text goes like this:

*Ring-a-ring-a-roses,
A pocket full of posies,
A-tishoo! A-tishoo!
We all fall down.*

FitzGerald states emphatically that this rhyme arose from the Great Plague, an outbreak of pneumonic plague that affected London in the year 1665:

Ring-a-Ring-a-Roses is all about the Great Plague; the apparent whimsy being a foil for one of London's most atavistic dreads (thanks to the Black Death). The fatalism of the rhyme is brutal: the roses are a euphemism for deadly rashes, the posies a supposed preventative measure; the a-tishoos pertain to sneezing symptoms, and the implication of everyone falling down is, well, death.

This interpretation emerged in the mid-twentieth century, and has become widespread, but it has never been accepted by folklorists, for several reasons. First, like most folklore items, this rhyme exists in many versions and variants. This allows us to ask whether the specific images associated with the plague occur in all or even most versions. It turns out they don't. Many versions have no words that sound like sneezes, and many versions don't mention falling down. For example, Iona and Peter Opie give an 1883 version (in which "curchey" is dialect for "curtsey"):

A ring, a ring o'roses

My dame has lost her shoe
 My master's lost his fiddling-stick
 They don't know what to do

This rhyme can also be found in the classic collections by Iona and Peter Opie. As Dundes points out, the fact that a wife loses her "shoe" and a husband his "stick," leading to them "not knowing what to do" is certainly suggestive that these are sexual metaphors. However, as with much humorously sexual folklore, there is also an innocent explanation: they were planning to go to a dance, where he would have contributed to the music and she to the dancing. With only one shoe and one fiddlestick, they won't be able to perform their roles!

27. Pat O' Mahony
 June 17, 2015 at 4:35 pm

Hi

I am Irish, and was born in Ireland in 1956 and remember when I was very young that our elders explained,

'ring- a- ring- a- rosie ,
 a pocket full of posie,
 atishoo, atishoo,
 we all fall down

as being a London city children's game.

'ring -a -ring -a rosy'

they explained as tuberculosis (TB) the pale round rose color on the patient's cheeks

' a pocket full of posies '

they explained that doctors attending this patient carried pockets of lavender herb which they used as a disinfectant to protect themselves from contracting the disease. They would regularly remove a bunch of lavender from their pockets and crush and wash their hands and face with it.

'a-tishoo a-tishoo'

they explained as being on death's door

'we all fall down'

they explained as death in very large numbers or an epidemic.

This version continues to be retold and is most popular here in Ireland.

28. Stephen Winick
 June 17, 2015 at 4:41 pm

Thanks for those details, Pat. It's very interesting that in Irish versions of the legend from the 1950s and 1960s, the disease had become tuberculosis. It shows that, while the legend can serve to associate the rhyme with the Middle Ages, other versions can be more up to date while preserving the same basic story!

29. bill
 June 27, 2015 at 11:31 pm

"It is what it is" !!

30. Stephen Winick
 June 30, 2015 at 10:28 am

Thanks, Bill! I assume you are suggesting that "Ring Around the Rosie" doesn't require the plague explanation; it simply is what it appears to be at first glance: a cute kids' game. This is a good

point, and it's interesting that you used metafolklore to express it.

How is it metafolklore? Most folklorists would characterize "it is what it is" as a proverb. "It is what it is" is a certain kind of proverb, a formulaic, seemingly tautological statement. Other examples of this kind of proverb include "business is business," "a promise is a promise," or, as Robert Burns observed, "a man's a man." All of these proverbs seem to be merely statements of the obvious. But proverbs have the interesting characteristic that most of them don't mean merely what they say; most have a figurative meaning. The figurative meaning of these proverbs saves them from tautology. That figurative meaning is some version of "one example of x should be treated as another example of x." Business is business, so don't expect a special discount because you're friends with the store owner. A promise is a promise, so don't think you can get out of yours. A man's a man, so don't treat rich people better than poor people.

"It is what it is" works in much the same way. "The deadline has been moved up a week. It is what it is, so don't try to change it." It's a type of folklore that's been around a long time, even though the specific phrase "it is what it is" has become popular only recently. In this case, too, the phrase is not only folklore but also metafolklore, because the "it" in the proverb refers to "Ring Around the Rosie," another item of folklore. Thus, you have generated a metafolkloric response to an article about metafolklore. Well done!

31. Deb in Denver

July 30, 2015 at 1:12 pm

I stumbled here by accident – isn't the 'net a wonderful invention? One thing I've wondered about in regard to this rhyme: while all humans presumably make the same sound while sneezing & have for eons, is it a coincidence that the ppl who make facial "tissue" named their product after the sound made in the third line of the RAtr chant? I think the Americanized "atchoo" sounds more like a sneeze, but the alleged orig. "atishoo" could be heard the same way. But going one step further, is it possible that "a tishoo" is simply a mnemonic for "a tissue"? I'd suggest that may be the case, esp. after reading in your exc. article that it wasn't until after WWII that the theories sprang up connecting RAtr with the black death/plague. Oh, we knew a bit about germs, but it wasn't until that war we pushed hard to garner yet more info to help in the fight to keep humans alive longer. So disposal tissues helped go a distance down that road. Throwing away germy, diseased paper made more sense than coming in intimate contact with said disease by hand-washing reusable cloth. (I too have read about plague coming to England's midlands by a shipment of cloth to a tailor.) It might have been a serendipitous way in the 40s to neatly wrap up loose ends, as it were.

Yeah, I know – I'm probably full of it, but I do so enjoy pondering odd things ♦♦

32. Larry

September 18, 2015 at 3:04 pm

I have always considered the rhyme to be about the plague, but being from England I may think that.

The first line is into reference of the symptoms either the rash or boil type thing.

The second is in reference to the "quacks" or doctors with the big masks with a beak looking thing on them which they would stuff with lavender and that kinda stuff because the smells weren't all that.

The 3rd, just another symptom, you get ill and sneeze.

Lastly we all fall down, lots and lots of people died.

Only to be stopped or helped come to an end by the great fire of London, which has another rhyme to it.

Humpty dumpty is also about a cannon that fell during the civil war(the British one) and that was a cannon that was in Colchester

33. Caroline Daniels**September 29, 2015 at 9:32 pm**

Can you tell me what the Jack and Jill ryme means. You know, Jack and Jill went up the hill to get a bucket of water. That would be nice to know what that means.

34. Kat**December 25, 2015 at 9:37 pm**

I have never heard of any of your versions. I am 61 yrs old and the version I grew up with was: Ring around the Rosie, pocket full of posies, Ashes, ashes , all fall down. More sinister than any of yours. I also asked friends and family and they also only know of my version

35. Stephen Winick**December 28, 2015 at 10:07 am**

Thanks for your comment, Kat. As I pointed out, the "sinister" interpretation of the rhyme emerged in the 1950s, exactly the era when you were born and your version seemed to be standard. So it's not a coincidence that your version (or one close to it) is the one discussed in the plague interpretation: the whole point was to use the most popular version of the rhyme to make it seem sinister. But if the plague interpretation were true, we'd expect it to apply most closely to the oldest versions, not the version that became standardized through print in the 20th century.

36. Melissa**January 30, 2016 at 10:48 am**

I grew up in the late 60s and early 70s and I don't remember ever actually playing these games, not "Rosie," not Snap the Whip or Red rover. We had Hide 'n Seek, of course.

I lived in a neighborhood without that many kids in it, maybe with the burgeoning of suburbia we lost some of these traditions.

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*A pocket full of posies
One for Jack and one for Jim and one for little Moses
A curchey in and a curchey out
And a curchey all together*

Moreover, in many versions, everyone gets up again once they have fallen down, which hardly makes sense if falling down represents death.

"Posies," or bouquets of flowers, are almost universal in the song. However, many versions do not make them portable but install them in pots or bottles, which doesn't fit well with the plague interpretation. William Wells Newell, writing in 1883, gave several versions, including:

*Round the ring of roses
Pots full of posies
The one who stoops last
Shall tell whom she loves best*

and

*Ring around the rosie
Bottle full of posy
All the girls in our town
Ring for little Josie*

On May 16, 1939, in Wiergate, Texas, John and Ruby Lomax collected an interesting version for the Library of Congress, from a group of African American schoolgirls. You can hear it in the player below. The words were as follows:

*Ring around a Rosey
Pocketful o' posies
Light bread, sweet bread, squat!
Guess who she told me, tralalalala
Mr. Red was her lover, tralalalala
If you love him, hug him!
If you hate him, stomp!*

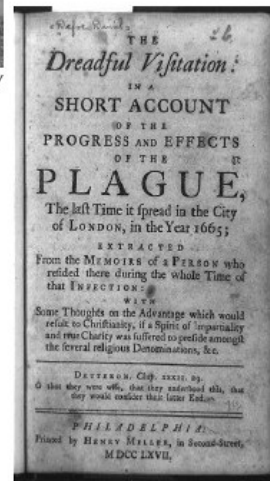
None of these versions fits the plague interpretation very well, but they do reveal other functions and meanings: the rhyme is often used as a playful courtship game in which children dance in a ring, then suddenly stoop, squat, curtsy ("curchey"), or in some cases fall to the ground. The last to do so (or the one that jumps the gun) has to pay a penalty, which is sometimes to profess love for (or hug or kiss) another child. In some versions, this child then takes up a place in the middle of the ring, representing the "rosie" or rose bush. Newell explicitly states that the game was played like this in America in the 1880s, and European analogs from the same time and later are similar. In many versions, then, the roses and posies signify what flowers often signify in traditional European culture: not suffering and death, but joy and love.

The above observations show that "Ring Around the Rosie" is a "singing-game" or a "play-party song," both of which are names for children's dance songs. Plague theorists say it's still possible that the plague was the original meaning, and that children pressed the rhyme into service for their games and dances. But there are other reasons, too, not to believe the plague story. For example, this rhyme and dance are internationally distributed, and records turn up on the European continent before they do in England. The



Children playing "Ring Around the Rosie" in Chicago, Illinois, April, 1941. Photo by Edwin Rosskam. Prints and Photographs Division.
[//hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/fsa.8a15771](https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/fsa.8a15771)

Opies give versions from Germany, Switzerland, and Italy, among other places. Meanwhile, there's no evidence the rhyme existed in English until the late 19th Century. Newell, writing in 1883, asserted that the rhyme was known in New Bedford, Massachusetts, in 1790, but he gave no evidence, and none has come to light. After this unsubstantiated claim, the rhyme doesn't turn up in English until 1881. What evidence is there it survived undocumented since 1665?



Title page of *The Dreadful Visitation: in a short account of the progress and effects of the plague* by Daniel Defoe. This is one of several contemporary accounts of the plague year, none of which mentions anything resembling "Ring Around the Rosie." Prints and Photographs

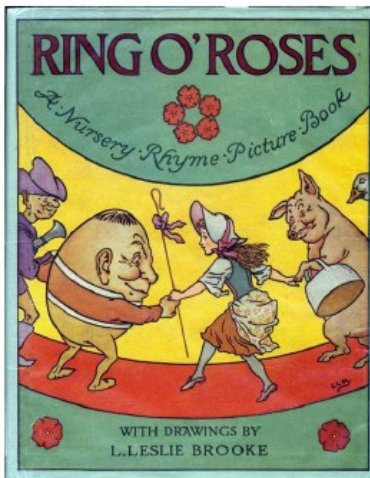
Division. [//hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3b41405](https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3b41405)

The claim that the rhyme is related to pestilence is even younger; the folklorists who diligently recorded the rhyme itself in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries never mention the plague interpretation, although they surely would have had they known it. The first evidence I've seen that people were connecting the rhyme with death and disaster is from 1949, when the newspaper *The Observer* ran a parody of the rhyme beginning "ring-a-ring-o'-geranium, a pocketful of uranium" and referring to the bombing of Hiroshima. In 1951, we find the first direct reference to the plague interpretation: Iona and Peter Opie state that some people believe the rhyme refers to the plague, but are not themselves convinced.

Finally, there's simply no direct evidence. Even if the rhyme itself remained unrecorded for two hundred years after the plague, various types of evidence might exist: a description of children playing dancing-games referring to roses and mocking the plague, or oral traditions of the earliest informants making the link. As it turns out, though, neither of these kinds of evidence has turned up, despite meticulous day-to-day accounts of life in London in 1665, and accounts of the Plague by people who lived through it. So today's scholars want to know: how did the first person who claimed a connection between the events of 1665 and this rhyme find out about that connection, and why can't we find whatever evidence he or she had?

All this makes scholars skeptical, to say the least. In 2010 English folklorist and librarian Steve Roud noted that "the Plague origin is complete nonsense," and in the 1980s, the Opies (who first recorded and debunked the belief in 1951) wrote: "We ourselves have had to listen so often to this interpretation we are reluctant to go out of the house."

Still, the story only seems to have grown stronger in the second half of the twentieth century, and this itself is interesting to folklorists. After all, the story is itself folklore: a tale that was passed on by word of mouth first, then in writing and online media. And because it is also about folklore, folklorists classify it as “metafolklore”: folklore about folklore.



The cover of Leonard Leslie Brooke's *Ring O' Roses* shows nursery rhyme characters performing "Ring Around the Rosie." The book was first published in 1922 and the image is therefore in the public domain.

If the plague story is folklore, we would expect to encounter it in different versions and variants. And so we do. The two main variants are the Londonist's claim that the rhyme refers to the Great Plague of 1665, and others' claims that it stems from the Black Death of 1347. Within these two main variants, there are sub-variants: in particular, FitzGerald and others say the 1665 rhyme originated in London, while others say it came from Eyam, a village in the English Midlands that was also infected with plague in 1665. One article even claims Eyam children sang it "while dancing around the victims!"

There are also innumerable individual versions of this story, each with its own quirks. Because the plague can infect different parts of the body and cause different symptoms, because people know about or imagine different historical health practices, and because different versions of the rhyme have different specific words, plague stories vary widely in the correspondences they find between words and plague experiences: for some, "a-tishoo" signifies a sneeze, while for others "ashes" signify cremation. For supporters of pneumonic plague, the ring is a rosy skin rash, while for supporters of the bubonic plague it's a red inflammation around a black buboe. In fact, observing the many different ways in

which "Ring Around the Rosie" has been said to conform to real or supposed symptoms, it seems clear that the story did not grow from compelling evidence; rather, evidence has been gathered to support a compelling story.

Metafolkloric stories can be either accurate or inaccurate, but in either case, there's usually a compelling reason we keep telling them, or a deeper truth they express. So one question folklorists like to ask is: "What has been so interesting to people about this story?" That's a hard question to answer, but we can note certain patterns in the kinds of people who tell it. It's very appealing to historians, for whom a glimpse of the distant past in the present is always exciting. It's especially compelling to historians of the plagues themselves; in fact, standard works about the 1347 plague and the 1665 plague recount the story as fact. Part of the task of such historians is to explain how the plague has continued to influence our lives, and the chance to mention a rhyme everyone knows and connect it to this deep history is irresistible. Secondly, the story is often told by advocates for particular places. Travel blogs spread the Eyam story, while Londonist "celebrates London and everything that happens in it." Advocates for medical education and even for sanitary sewers have used the song's supposed connection to disease to suggest that their particular expertise remains relevant to anyone who has heard this common rhyme. Finally, there are many people with a love of the macabre, and nothing is more disturbing than the idea of little children playing to a description of pestilence and death.

Our love for the plague story goes deeper than the agendas of a few interest groups, though. Even professors who know it's not true can't resist telling it! Folklorists know better than anyone the fascination with things that are older than they seem, and with "extraordinary origins of everyday things." Some founders of the discipline of folklore espoused the theory of survivals, which held that cultural materials such as nursery rhymes preserved information from the past that was otherwise forgotten. To adherents of this theory, a shard of pottery, a riddle, or a child's jingle could be the key that unlocked the mythology of the distant past, and the folklorist's task was to interpret or decode the cryptic messages within these fragments. In fact, the irony is that the plague story resembles nothing so much as a nineteenth-century folklorist's interpretation of the rhyme, but today's folklorists often express annoyance with the tale's persistence. Maybe it reminds us too much of ourselves.

In any case, we certainly understand its appeal: in the marketplace of ideas, a good story often outsells mere facts.

Do you know an interesting story about a nursery rhyme that you're curious about? Leave us a comment below!

Resources

Several of the books cited above with links to their Library of Congress catalog records are also available elsewhere as free electronic resources. The Library of Congress can't always vouch for the quality of reproduction, the accuracy of the text, or the beauty of the presentation, but they may be useful to our readers. These items are in the public domain:

Mother Goose or the Old Nursery Rhymes, illustrated by Kate Greenaway

Ring O' Roses, by Leonard Leslie Brooke

A Journal of the Plague Year, by Daniel Defoe

The Diary of Samuel Pepys, 1659-1669, edited by Henry B. Wheatley

Posted in: Folksong, Legends, Medieval Folklore, Poetry

36 Comments

1. Lisa P.
July 24, 2014 at 3:32 pm

One that I have sometimes heard is that "Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary" is a reference to Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots. I have my doubts, but would be interested in knowing more about the idea.

2. Stephen Winick
July 24, 2014 at 3:52 pm

Thanks, Lisa. That idea has been around for a long time, but there are competing interpretations too. One holds that it is a description of Our Lady's convent, which would metaphorically be Mary's garden. The bells are the church bells, the shells were worn as badges by pilgrims, and the maids are the nuns. The story about Mary Queen of Scots suggests that the shells and bells were decorations on her dress, and the pretty maids her ladies-in-waiting, the famous "Four Marys."

As the Opies point out, the connection to Mary Queen of Scots is certainly somebody's guess; there is no real evidence for it. But it's not impossible: while the rhyme was not recorded until 1744, there is a dance tune whose title is "Cuckolds all in a Row," which is a line of one 18th-century version of the Mary rhyme. The tune fits the rhyme, and goes back at least to 1651, which suggests the rhyme could be that old. Mary Queen of Scots died in 1587, so there isn't that great a time gap between her life and the first stirrings of evidence of the rhyme.

3. Patricia A. Atkinson
July 24, 2014 at 3:56 pm

" nothing is more disturbing than the idea of little children playing to a description of pestilence and death" – Actually, the idea of little children dancing and singing around actual plague victims is more disturbing, at least to me! 💎💎

I always enjoy reading Stephen's essays on things folkloric. They are well-researched, well-written, and often both amusing and enlightening.

~ Pat

4. Stephen Winick

July 24, 2014 at 4:17 pm

Your point is taken, Pat! And thanks for your kind comment!

5. Bob Danforth

July 25, 2014 at 12:00 am

I would be very interested in seeing links to old books go to the scans of the actual old books where copyright or other impediment is not at issue. This seems to be an increasing trend among libraries and museums to maintain such archives. It hugely increases access and at the same time protects and preserves the actual copy, causing far less deterioration as 90% of the needs for any access can be achieved in the digital archive.

I would find it very interesting to correlate (and a page of fixed links could do it) the many political conversations that could not be had openly for fear that you would be killed, but a tune hummed or a nursery rhyme could be equally devastating and no individual could be charged with actual advocacy.

Such a list could provide many fascinating details not normally recorded.

6. Paul Cowdell

July 25, 2014 at 7:55 am

Thanks, this is great. Eyam's accumulating a whole range of plague-related motifs. In the village you can find, for example, a weathervane representing a plague-spreading rat, even though the village legend traditions don't blame this particular outbreak of plague on rats at all. (The infected fleas are supposed to have arrived in a parcel of cloth delivered to a village tailor).

7. Abby Sale

July 25, 2014 at 4:50 pm

Nice article. Thank you.

I heard, and accepted, that the plague explanation was merely a "Just So" story for 50 years but it was always just summarily dismissed. If an explanation was given, it was a statement that there is no evidence to accept that it's true and the burden is on the claimer. Of course, that's true but it's far more satisfying to read the negative evidence and reasoning that does exist.

I feel better now.

8. B. Ross

July 26, 2014 at 11:52 am

You know, the way it was explained to me had nothing to do with the traits of the disease itself. Rather, it was about the morality of it all.

"Ring around the Rosie" — refers to counting the Rosary while praying. Both Catholicism and Church of England have this tradition.

"Pocket Full of Posies" — explained to me as stuffing the pockets of the dead with flowers to help ward off stench, but may also be a reference to "Posie rings"

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Posie_ring)

"Ashes, ashes" — as in "ashes to ashes, dust to dust"

"We all fall down" — self-explanatory in this context.

This is not to say that this interpretation is any less apocryphal than the ones outlined above—and the fact that "ashes, ashes" is an American variant is especially abrogating—but as interpreted above, it is a cohesive thought relative to one aspect of the Plague.

In fact, given the multiple variations and interpretations above, it is unlikely that it was ever written specifically to reference the plague. But who's to say that it wasn't appropriated and repurposed for that? After all, Folklore is replete with examples of cultural appropriation.

9. Stephen Winick

July 28, 2014 at 12:01 pm

B. Ross, thanks for your comment and your unusual version of the Plague story. It's still unlikely that the rhyme was appropriated and repurposed at the time of the plague, simply because there's no evidence it existed then. But it is certainly true that the rhyme was appropriated and repurposed to tell a story about the plague after the fact. Usually the story is a variant of "the Plague affected modern life in unexpected ways." Your version is no exception; in this case, it's the prayers in response to the Plague that became a nursery rhyme rather than a description of its effects. So the emphasis, as you say, is on the moral and spiritual aspects rather than the physical and medical.

10. Stephen Winick

July 29, 2014 at 1:00 pm

Bob Danforth, thanks for your comment. The Library of Congress doesn't have a large collection of online digital public domain books over which we exercise strict quality control, but we do participate in projects to digitize books, including the Hathi Trust. I've added a resource list with links to online versions of the four public-domain items cited in the text. In three cases I used the Hathi Trust versions, although others are available on the internet. For the Pepys diary, I opted for another site, because the diary is a multivolume work and the relevant entries spread over three of the volumes. For that reason, I selected a simple HTML site presenting the entire text, so readers wouldn't have to search each volume separately.

11. Joe Hickerson

August 5, 2014 at 7:22 pm

Great article! Well done! I seem to recall that during the 1959+ Ban the Bomb movement in England, one poet published two small collections of re-worked nursery rhymes, etc., on the subject. One, as I recall, was "A-ring around a neutron / a-pocket full of positron / a-fission, a-fission / we all fall down." Kind-a like your 1949 example.

12. Ann Canning

August 6, 2014 at 8:19 am

I can make a personal note that corroborates the Texas 1939 Lomax version of this song. I spent my childhood in the Piedmont region of North Carolina (Winston-Salem) and distinctly remember in the 1940's on the Elementary School playground singing this song with these words: Ring around the Rosie, Pocketful of posies. Red Bird, Blue Bird, Squat! Rosie was the child in the middle and the last child in the ring to squat became the next Rosie. I don't know why we would have said Red Bird, Blue Bird instead of Light Bread, Sweet Bread as they did in Texas. But I do know that my grandmother and mother did not bake light or yeast breads. They only made quick breads like corn bread and biscuits.

13. Stephen Winick
August 11, 2014 at 11:03 am

Thanks for the interesting North Carolina version and the description of the game, Ann. It's always nice to get new folklore items from our readers!

14. Stephen Winick
August 11, 2014 at 11:05 am

Thanks, Joe. By then the idea that "Ring Around the Rosie" was about the Plague was already common in England, which is probably where the idea came from to connect it to other deadly disasters.

15. Dolly Jørgensen
August 22, 2014 at 2:36 am

Has anyone suggested that the "A-tishoo! A-tishoo!" line might be related to sneezing because of the flowers themselves? Certainly taking a whiff of strong smelling fresh flowers might induce that reaction in many, especially of course if you have allergies.

16. Stephen Winick
August 22, 2014 at 12:57 pm

That's certainly a possibility for those versions that feature sneezing sounds. Thanks for the suggestion!

17. rishitha
August 26, 2014 at 4:42 am

I was very intrested in reading the articles on folkloric. That are really good.

18. Judith Cohen
October 31, 2014 at 11:14 am

Love that Texas version! Folklore in general, and sometimes children's folklore in particular, is – very often – so refreshingly non-pc...

19. Black Death
December 10, 2014 at 3:52 pm

This is refferd to the Black Death,"ashes ashes"-the corpses after the Black Death were all burned so that makes sense,everything else,look for another comment

20. Renate van den Bosch
December 22, 2014 at 7:43 am

Hi, this rhyme was also used in a childrens television series, in which a girl living or visiting an old manor house has visions of soldiers marching through the same house in past times. Does anyone know the name of this TV show?? Don't know whether it was British or American, it was broadcast in the seventies, maybe early eighties.

21. lovetina
May 21, 2015 at 3:40 pm

i want to know the true meaning,
if the song means something bad or evil

22. Stephen Winick
May 21, 2015 at 3:45 pm

It doesn't seem to mean anything bad or evil. It seems to be a game where the words describe the actions the kids are supposed to do. In some versions, kids kiss other kids, so your reaction might depend on the version and on what you think is proper behavior!

23. Brigita
May 24, 2015 at 1:01 pm

"Ring around the rosie": Once I was in London, i've heard the story that when a person was brought to execution and was going warded through the streets to the execution place – people, family members or supporters threw flowers to them and sang the song to them.

24. Jessica Rubinstein
May 24, 2015 at 5:18 pm

With absolutely no evidence, except the unsatisfactoriness of explanations I have found, I have always wondered if "There was an old woman who lived in a shoe" might be an unkind British satire concerning the Catholic Church, with the shoe a reference to the shape of Italy. The specifics about the whipping, the broth, etc. would depend on the political moment in which the rhyme originated, the inquisition being a possible reference. Has anyone ever looked into the possibility?

25. Stephen Winick
May 26, 2015 at 9:50 am

Thanks, Brigita, for your comment. It's interesting that completely different stories exist connecting the rhyme to earlier historical periods and to death imagery. All such stories are metafolklore, and so far none of them has any good evidence to back it up. As I said in the post, it is possible for metafolkloric stories to also be true, but in these cases no reference to the rhyme at all turns up before 1881, and public executions ceased in England in 1868; after that executions were usually conducted in private within the prison where the prisoner already was kept, so there was no journey to a place of execution. So, while it's not impossible that the rhyme was used that way before 1868, there's no direct evidence, and all the indirect evidence points the other way: the rhyme probably didn't exist when public executions were common in England. In general, most folklorists would call that story a fascinating variant of the general idea that the seemingly simple and innocent nursery rhyme actually has a dark and secret history.

26. Stephen Winick
May 26, 2015 at 10:49 am

Thanks, Jessica. I have seen that interpretation, but I do not know its origin. The version I saw did not mention the inquisition, just the generally impoverished conditions of many Catholics in the south of Italy, which does suggest certain historical periods over others. This reading turns up in various dark corners of the web, such as this one. A more general interpretation notes that shoes are an old fertility symbol, showing up in such contexts as Cinderella's glass slipper and the old custom of throwing shoes at the bride and groom at a wedding (which survives today in the form of tying old shoes to the rear bumper of their car). Alan Dundes discusses this in his essay "Projection in Folklore," available in the book *Interpreting Folklore*. His idea seems to be that the old woman "living in a shoe" suggests an over-emphasis on sexuality, which leads to having too many children, but he is not explicit on this point. As he so often does, he flits from folklore item to folklore item, discussing at greater length another rhyme:

Cock-a-doodle-doo

Cops Rescued From Elevator With 'Severely Injured' Egos

2016-04-28

go.com

<http://abcnews.go.com/US/missouri-cops-rescued-elevator-severely-injured-egos/story?id=38743203>

Missouri Cops Rescued From Elevator With 'Severely Injured' Egos

• By JESSICA ROONEY

Apr 28, 2016, 4:08 PM ET



A dozen
Kansas
City
police
officers
were
rescued

Kansas City Police Department

Wednesday afternoon after getting stuck in an elevator, officials said.

The Missouri cops were training at the police academy when an elevator apparently stopped because of their combined weight.

Academy staff had to make an "embarrassing" call to the fire department for a rescue team, officials said.

"They had some good-natured fun," Kansas City Fire Department spokesman James Garrett said. "It's always a treat when you're in the helping business and you get to help fellow brothers out."

Tim Duplin of the fire department said, "They thought it was funny. It's a good, fun rivalry that we have. We do charitable events, and softball tournaments together, but this was an unexpected encounter."

A photo of the rescue quickly trended on social media with more than 7,000 shares on Facebook and 500 retweets on Twitter. The Kansas City Police Department posted the photo to its Facebook page Wednesday, saying, "Well, this is embarrassing."

None of the twelve officers was injured.

"Everyone was physically safe," the police department said, "but egos were severely injured."

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The Mongol Intelligence Apparatus

The Triumphs of Genghis Khan's Spy Network

a weak attempt to mitigate their effect, Sultan Mohammed closed all eastern trade routes.²⁹

Political intelligence was especially important for Genghis' spies in Khwarezm. The Mongol agents learned of widespread disunity among the Khwarezm army (much of which was composed of mercenaries), a quasi-shadow government set up by Turkhan Khatun (Sultan Mohammed's mother), and a heated debate over Sultan Mohammed's successor.³⁰

Sultan Mohammed received intelligence indicating that the Mongol Army had difficulty with siege warfare during their invasion of the Chin Empire. Therefore, the Khwarezm capital of Smarkand was duly fortified.³¹ This intelligence was accurate. The Mongols *had* difficulty with siege warfare. But Genghis had learned of Sultan Mohammed's strategy and acquired an untold number of Chinese siege engineers.³² Genghis also chose to take the path of least resistance. Instead of marching straight towards Smarkand, the Mongols took an unexpected detour toward neighboring Bokhara. The city could not have been less prepared. After the last few elements of armed resistance were suppressed, Bokhara's wealthiest citizens were gathered together to hear the words of the Rightful Ruler. Genghis delivered a chilling message:

"O people, know that you have committed great sins, and that the great ones among you have committed these sins. If you ask me what proof I have for these words, I say it is because I am the punishment of God. If you had not committed great sins, God would not have sent a punishment like me upon you."³³

Genghis may have been more pragmatic and calculating than most realize, but certainly he had a violent reputation for good reason.

Thanks to the help of Genghis' Chinese technicians, Smarkand fell in 1220. Tensions rose and mistrust ran wild among the Khwarezm army, pitting loyalists of

Sultan Mohammed against those of his mother.³⁴ Armed with strong intelligence about this family dispute, Genghis sought to exploit the situation. The dispersal of disinformation was a favored tactic of the Mongols.³⁵ The Muslim merchants were famous for eliciting a wide range of propaganda among the populace. But Genghis was known to use even sneakier tactics of disinformation. A Mongol “defector” who was able to reach Sultan Mohammed, presented him with an intercepted message purportedly from Turkhan Khatun to Genghis. In the message was the proposal for an alliance. Fearing that his empire was collapsing faster than anticipated; Sultan Mohammed removed his forces from a strong defensive position along the Amu Darya River and fled to Persian Iraq.³⁶ Genghis Khan deposed the Khwarezm Shah not by strength and power, but by guile and deceit. The Mongols had a fully functional intelligence apparatus that was light-years ahead of its time.

Lessons Learned

The key aspect of the Mongol’s intelligence strategy is that it was both offensive and defensive in nature. States cannot simply seek to acquire information; they must impede other’s ability to gain it. No intelligence apparatus should be overly focused on any one strategy. There must be a comprehensive and balanced effort to acquire information, secure information, and misdirect efforts to permeate the system. A pragmatic allocation of resources is critical. Any excess effort expended is going to adversely affect other intelligence efforts. If too much emphasis is put on securing information, fewer efforts will go towards acquiring it. Genghis Khan was cunning and

sly, but what helped bring down Sultan Mohammed was his multi-faceted holistic approach. It was not only about military intelligence, it was about political intelligence. He did not seek to simply secure information; he sought to misdirect the feeble intelligence gathering efforts of his foes. These blitzkrieg-style intelligence operations inundated those employing more linear tactics.

Genghis Khan's political acumen is also worth mentioning. His attempts to curry favor with the local populace laid the groundwork for intelligence gathering. Many of these attempts were less than genuine, but the effectiveness of garnering public support cannot be overstated. This Mongol soft power was the key to swift victory in Qara Khatai and certainly helped the pre-war intelligence reports on the Khwarezm Empire. Few people associate Genghis Khan with the concept of soft power. But his version of soft power had little to do with humility or humanity; it was about pragmatism and common sense. Why waste manpower and resources ravaging a city when its citizens are willing to submit? Genghis Khan learned that armed resistance was less likely from a cooperative populace. It is no coincidence that these are the same lessons that Coalition Forces have learned during their time in the same region. The Rightful Ruler never hesitated to exercise hard power, but his strength lay in his ability to choose the proper course of action. Spycraft is more art than science and Genghis Khan was a skilled craftsman.

Notes

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- ¹ Ratchnevsky, 16
 - ² Lister, 89
 - ³ De Hartog, 20
 - ⁴ Lister, 106
 - ⁵ De Hartog, 20-21
 - ⁶ De Hartog, 30
 - ⁷ De Hartog, 24
 - ⁸ Kahn, 76
 - ⁹ De Hartog 25
 - ¹⁰ Lane, 35
 - ¹¹ Morgan, 103
 - ¹² Ricci, 484
 - ¹³ Morgan, 105
 - ¹⁴ Allsen, 97
 - ¹⁵ Allsen, 97
 - ¹⁶ Allsen, 87
 - ¹⁷ Ratchnevsky, 111
 - ¹⁸ Alexseev, 134
 - ¹⁹ Alexseev, 132
 - ²⁰ De Hartog, 142
 - ²¹ De Hartog, 84
 - ²² De Hartog, 90
 - ²³ Ibid.
 - ²⁴ De Hartog, 91
 - ²⁵ Ratchnevsky, 122
 - ²⁶ Tanner, 87
 - ²⁷ Tanner, 88
 - ²⁸ De Hartog, 91
 - ²⁹ De Hartog, 92
 - ³⁰ Alexseev, 139-40
 - ³¹ Ratchnevsky, 173-174
 - ³² Ibid
 - ³³ Tanner, 90
 - ³⁴ Alexseev, 144
 - ³⁵ Allsen, 96
 - ³⁶ Alexseev, 145

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When Moses sent them to explore Canaan, he said, 'Go up through the Negev and on into the hill country. See what the land is like and whether the people who live there are strong or weak, few or many. What kind of land do they live in? Is it good or bad? What kind of towns do they live in? Are they unwalled or fortified? How is the soil? Is it fertile or poor? Are there trees on it or not? Do your best to bring back some of the fruit of the land.'

- Numbers 13:17-20

Intelligence has played a role in most, if not all, militarized disputes in history. Long before U-2 spy planes and explosive-filled undergarments, leaders sought out information regarding their enemies' strengths, weaknesses, motivations, etc. Accurate reliable intelligence is a lethal weapon on the battlefield. Today, Western intelligence agencies sift through mountains of data and exploit an untold number of human sources in order to improve situational awareness against various asymmetric threats. Many of these threats are emanating from Asia and the Middle East. Gathering intelligence in these regions has never been easy. Xenophobia is pervasive in these areas where tribes and clans often hold more clout than religion and nationality. Those able to extract intelligence from this region can conquer enemies of monetary and numerical superiority.

In 1162, a young Mongol boy by the name of Temujin was born with a blood clot in his fist. This was said to be a sign of a great leader.¹ The prophecy was fulfilled in a way few could have foreseen. Temujin was to become the leader of one of the greatest empires in human history. He was a great military strategist, but his unparalleled ability to run intelligence operations was the key to his victories.

An early *anda* (blood brother) of Temujin's, named Jamuqa, would become one of his earliest rivals. Jamuqa and Temujin were both promising young Mongol leaders. Their companionship was real and the bond between them was not easily broken.² It was Jamuqa who had aided Temujin in his battle against the Merkit tribe to recover his kidnapped wife Berta. In 1206, however, a *quriltai* (a meeting of tribal and military leadership) was convened and Jamuqa was conferred as Gur Khan (Universal Ruler).³ This caused some division amongst the Mongol peoples. Jamuqa and Temujin were two

strong personalities with equally strong followings.⁴ Although Jamuqa was considered the superior military strategist, it was Temujin that had an aptitude for accessing intelligence and could enable various groups to coexist. Their friendship quickly dissolved after the *quriltai*. Neither men were fit for subordinate roles.

The practice of using spies or scouts was not new to these men. In fact, such a large number of spies were used that much intelligence had to be passed off as disinformation. By the time Gur Khan sent out his “defectors”, Temujin had already been declared Genghis Khan (Rightful Ruler) of his people. The disinformation Gur Khan’s spies delivered Genghis was irrelevant. Gur Khan was clearly readying his troops for battle. Genghis would reciprocate.⁵

There were numerous skirmishes between the two Mongol Khans, many of which Gur Khan would be victorious. But Genghis’ men had an unsurpassed devotion to him, a trait Gur Khan sorely lacked. With each passing scuffle, more Mongol clans would revert to Genghis. His fate sealed, Gur Khan asked his former *anda* to put him to death. In ceremonial fashion (without the spilling of blood), Genghis Khan broke Gur Khan’s back.⁶

Gur Khan was not the only person who felt threatened by the ascension of Genghis. Senggum, the son of Ong Khan and partner of Gur Khan, devised a plan to invite Genghis to a conciliatory meeting and assassinate him.⁷ After Genghis failed to show, Senggum prepared his men to attack. The assault proved ineffective against Genghis’ men. News of the assassination attempt and the corresponding counterattack had all been leaked by two shepherds. *The Secret History of the Mongols* insinuates that these two men, Badai and Kishliq, were Genghis’ spies.⁸ Others warned him of the

assassination attempt,⁹ but it was his own well-placed verifiable sources that assuaged any doubts he may have had. If not for his crafty manipulation of sources, Genghis may have never outlasted his rivals and propelled himself into the pages of history.

The *Yam* (*Jam*) System

During one *quriltai*, Genghis brought forth a set of laws in which the Mongols were to live by. These laws were known as the *Yasa* code, or the Great *Yasa*. Its implementation was meant to bring an atmosphere of structure and discipline to the empire's daily functions. As opposed to other empires, where heredity and tribe determined rank and duty, the Great *Yasa* was a merit-based system that did not discriminate on the basis of religion or ethnic background. This design was advantageous for productivity, morale, and diplomatic relations.¹⁰ The *Yasa* could not have been more valuable. The rigidity of the code allowed one system, in particular, to flourish.

Much of Genghis' information was elicited from merchants. They were deployed to rival lands as merchants, ambassadors, representatives, etc. But, ultimately, their goal was to extract information. As stated earlier, none of these practices were unique. What enabled Genghis' informant network to flourish was the Mongol *Yam* system.¹¹ This was a communication network that allowed information to travel from 200-300 miles per day.¹² Way stations were created so that caravans could relay their cargo. It is likely this system was the offspring of the Abassid's *barid* system. The Mongols, however, took the concept to a different level. By clearing valleys and straightening roads, the overall efficiency of the empire improved greatly and merchants from all over sought to gain

access to the *Yam*. This system proved fruitful for Genghis' army, his merchants and those pretending to be merchants.

This was not a public system. With vital goods and information passing back and forth from these way stations, a functioning security system had to be created. Awaiting groups were not simply handed incoming cargo. All sanctioned convoys had to possess the appropriate *paiza* (tablet of authority).¹³ Depending on the rank of the person, each *paiza* was composed of different materials with a variety of illustrations. This was a 13th century version of a security clearance. Genghis Khan was a man that valued his information.

There were many benefits to using the *Yam* system, but its main purpose was to improve the Mongol's intelligence gathering capabilities. Recently discovered evidence gives credence to this claim. Messengers emanating from military posts were given preferential treatment at way stations. Historian Thomas T. Allsen uncovered an imperial decree from 1233 that stated, "If messengers coming from military headquarters meet any trading Muslims, [the messengers], no matter what [the merchant's] business, shall confiscate their horses to ride between stations."¹⁴ Considerable profit was made by merchants who had access the *Yam* system.¹⁵ Profit, however, was an ancillary benefit. The primary function of the *Yam* was to expedite the transfer of intelligence communiqués. There is no question that commerce was of importance to Genghis, but commerce never alerted him to troop formations or assassination attempts.

The use of Muslim merchants was a favored practice of Genghis. Collecting information, while performing their everyday duties, was as effective as it was natural.

Some of these merchants were so good, in fact, that they gained minor notoriety. Hasan Hajji and Ja'far Khwajah are two oft-mentioned figures who Genghis grew quite fond. These men served as merchants, spies, ambassadors, and soldiers.¹⁶ Ja'far led peace negotiations with the besieged city of Zhongdu (1214)¹⁷ and Hasan was eventually put in charge of gathering political intelligence in the Chin Empire.¹⁸ It is easy to understand Genghis' fondness for men with such versatile talents. Later we will see how Genghis' emphasis on political intelligence played a critical role in the invasion of the Khwarezm Empire.

Another notable Mongol spy was Ila Ahai. Originally part of a Kerait envoy, Ila Ahai was apparently so impressed with Genghis after their first meeting that he decided to become a double agent. Ila Ahai would go on to create a network of spies. He even allowed his brother Tuke to be taken hostage so that he could become a Mongol guard.¹⁹

Sultan Mohammed II of Khwarezm had spies of his own, but he was not able to attract a comparable level of talent. Genghis' savvy intelligence operations, the structure of the *Yasa* code, and the efficiency of the *Yam* system (coupled with the arrival of the Mongolian alphabet in the early 13th century)²⁰, put Sultan Mohammed at a distinct disadvantage.

The Invasion of Khwarezm

For all of Genghis' victories, intelligence played the greatest role during his invasion of the Khwarezm Empire. Sources disagree on the size of the Mongol army, but they are universally assumed to have been numerically inferior. This size disadvantage

required Genghis to apply a multifaceted approach to both intelligence gathering and war fighting.

Before the Khwarezm Empire and Sultan Mohammed could be dealt with, Genghis had to dispose of Kuchlug and his Qara Khitai kingdom. The Qara Khitai and Khwarezm empires were divided by the Syr Darya River, which Genghis would have to transverse in order to engage Sultan Mohammed.

Conquering Qara Khitai was considerably easier thanks to the Kuchlug's draconian policies. A large portion of the Qara Khitai population was Muslim. Therefore, they were less than enthused when Kuchlug demanded all citizens convert to Buddhism or Nestorianism.²¹ Thanks to his trusty Muslim merchants, Genghis was well aware of the anger these people felt. Citizens were more than open to the possibility of new leadership.²² It also helped that Genghis had gained moderate notoriety for the religious tolerance of his *Yasa* code.

The invasion of Qara Khitai began in 1218. Jebe, one of Genghis' most trusted generals, made quick work of Kuchlug's forces. (It should be noted that Jebe forbade his troops from plundering the cities and terrorizing the people. This was a tall task for a 13th century fighting force, but this famously disciplined army was capable.²³ Genghis did not want to squander the tremendous political capital he recently accumulated in Qara Khitai. Despite his reputation for being ruthless and cruel, Genghis was far more pragmatic and calculating than most people realize.) The usurped Kuchlug made a feeble attempt to flee, but had difficulty doing so. His harsh treatment of the local populace prohibited him from finding sufficient sanctuary. Jebe's men found Kuchlug near Badakshan and beheaded

him.²⁴ The head was paraded around for all to see. This was not a display of power, but a message to Sultan Mohammed.

The Mongols invaded Khwarezm sometime around 1219. However, before the conflict began there were several exchanges between Genghis and Sultan Mohammed. An initial envoy was sent from Khwarezm to ascertain Genghis' intentions. All of the men were received warmly and Genghis relayed a message that expressed his desire for a peaceful relationship. But there was one phrase in the message that was not well received by Sultan Mohammed. Genghis stated: "You are the best loved of my sons."²⁵ Genghis then sent a corresponding group of ambassadors to the city of Otrar. The envoy was attacked when they entered the city. The governor of Otrar, Inalchuq, sent word of their arrival to Sultan Mohammed and asked to execute the spies. Inalchuq received permission and put the men to death..²⁶ (When Otrar was overrun the next year, Genghis had Inalchuq killed by pouring molten silver into his eyes and ears.²⁷) Despite the bloody outcome of the first endeavor, Genghis sent one final envoy of two Mongols and one Muslim. The Mongols had their beards shaved and the Muslim was beheaded. Clearly, Sultan Mohammed did not possess a comparable intelligence apparatus. If he had, he would have known not to enrage the "Rightful Ruler."

Similar to the peoples of Qara Khitai, much of the Khwarezm population was Muslim. Despite being Muslim himself, Sultan Mohammed had done little to endear himself to his people. A revolt in Otrar resulted in the killing of hundreds of local Muslims and in 1217 Sultan Mohammed made a feeble attempt to overthrow the Caliph of Baghdad.²⁸ This did not mean the people of Khwarezm would be similarly spared, but it did mean that Genghis' Muslim spies were able to operate with significant impunity. In

Watch Monkey Drop Kick Unsuspecting Pedestrian To The Ground

huffingtonpost.com

HUFFPOST WEIRD NEWS Don't upset this simian!

04/10/2016 06:33 am ET | Updated 6 days ago

- Lee Moran Trends Editor, The Huffington Post

Crouching tiger, kicking monkey.

A sly simian drop kicks an unsuspecting pedestrian to the ground in surveillance video posted online. The crafty creature is seen sprinting toward its victim, who is walking down a road.

It leaps up and kicks the man, who is facing the other way, on his back. The walker tumbles, while the monkey jumps onto a car and flees over a rooftop.

The pedestrian doesn't appear to be injured as he quickly picks himself up, presumably with just a couple of bruises and a dented ego. The footage was filmed on Feb. 25, uploaded to YouTube over the weekend and is now going viral.

It's unclear exactly where the incident took place, or if the walker had previously provoked the monkey. The Huffington Post has reached out for more information.

Last April, another monkey drop kicked a man who gave it the finger in Shimla, India, while in February a knife-wielding monkey was caught in a rooftop standoff in Brazil.

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/* Copyright 2014 Evernote Corporation. All rights reserved. */.en-markup-crop-options { top: 18px !important; left: 50% !important; margin-left: -100px !important; width: 200px !important; border: 2px rgba(255,255,255,.38) solid !important; border-radius: 4px !important; }.en-markup-crop-options div div:first-of-type { margin-left: 0px !important; }

The Moorgate Train Crash | Historic Mysteries

historicmysteries.com

HISTORIC MYSTERIES

Historic Mysteries

estronal February 14, 2016
Unexplained

The London Underground became the very first metropolitan subterranean

railway system in the world back in 1863. The concept of such a transportation system was first proposed in the 1830s and permission to construct was only granted in 1854. The first trains were powered by steam and it was only during the 1890s that the entire system switched to electricity and became the clean and environmentally friendly travel that commuters have become accustomed to in many major cities across the world.



Emergency personnel comb through the wreckage.

Over the years and decades since, the London Underground – or the Tube as commuters prefer to call it these days – has grown and expanded to cover the whole of London and selected parts of the Home Counties. From one line that went from east to west, the London Underground now consists of 11 different lines. One of the key areas of the entire network is Kings Cross – scene of a devastating fire in late 1987 that sharply brought into focus the outdated safety measures of the time. This tragedy was not the only disaster to befall the London

Underground network. It was on 28 February 1975, something went horribly wrong when a packed commuter train traveling in the morning rush hour. The Moorgate train crash was London Underground's worst peace time disaster and it occurred inside a tunnel just outside Moorgate Station.

At 08:38 that morning, a Northern Line train (number 272) departed from Drayton Park a single minute late. By the time that it made an approach to Moorgate Station, there were 300 passengers on board. London Underground's recommendations to the approach to a station on the Underground network is to reduce operating speed to 15mph. Passengers on the platform at Moorgate awaiting the arrival of the service were dismayed to see the whole train continue onwards without stopping at a speed they calculated to be more like 30-40mph – and some believed that it was accelerating.

London Underground had measures put into place if just such an occurrence was to ever take place. Using a device they dubbed 'Sand drag', any carriages that are out of control are automatically diverted onto a siding or less dangerous track. This system is also used against any unauthorized vehicles that could potentially threaten scheduled services. 272 plowed on through this design and collided with buffers before striking the solid concrete wall beyond.

First responders to the scene initially thought that a 4 car train had slightly overshot the platform and needed to be shunted back into position. It was only when they worked their way along the tunnel that the situation was declared an emergency. The first two and a half cars of the train had been telescoped by the force of the impact into half their proper length. The first car was wedged into the roof of the tunnel. The second car had lodged beneath the first, while the third had travelled over the second and collided with the first. Seeing the first trio of cars wedged into a mess of mangled metal must have been a horrifying sight.



Wrecked train showing the position of third car. (Image credit: City of London Police)

The rescue operation took almost a week to complete and consisted of over 1600 emergency personnel. Joining the firemen, police and ambulance crews were 16 doctors and scores of volunteers and helpers. The last of the 74 injured passengers was removed from the scene over 13 hours after the crash. The last of the 43 fatalities to be removed from the scene was the train driver – a 56 year father of two called Leslie Newson.

Whenever a disaster of this magnitude occurs, the most obvious and pressing question that needs to be answered is why? Why did whatever happen, happen? When engineers

and investigators got what was left of the train to begin their analysis, numerous considerations as to the cause were eliminated one by one. When tested, all of the train's vital components and systems were found to be working as intended. Any that were found to be faulty were determined to be as a direct result of the impact and not the cause of it.

Investigators began to take a closer look at the driver. His post-mortem examination revealed that there were no signs of cardiac problems nor of a condition such as epilepsy. The few people that knew him insisted that he was cautious when at work and usually slowed his train down inside a tunnel and coasted into the station. Newson was also a known teetotaler and on 27 February was shopping for cars for his daughter. When he was found, there were no indications that Newson had done anything to prevent injury to himself. His hand was still holding the brake. In the aftermath of the crash, a couple of curious facts about the driver came to light. The week before the crash, it was reported by another guard that Newson's train also failed to stop at another station. Passengers awaiting the arrival of the fatal train noted that the driver sat upright and was looking directly ahead – almost as if he was unaware that he was passing through a scheduled stop.

Investigators had a clear idea as to what happened: the train failed to stop at Moorgate and was going too fast for the installed safety procedures of the time. What they don't know is why. Why did a commuter train fail to stop when supposed to when both driver and train had no known issues?

Sources

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Rail Magazine
BBC On this Day
Murder is Everywhere

estronal

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Moose plays tune on Alaska woman's wind chimes

upi.com



By Daniel Uria | May 11, 2016 at 3:59 PM



A wild moose used an Alaska woman's wind chimes to perform a brief, impromptu concert outside her window. Britta Schroeder said she heard the chime moving but was surprised to look out her window and find the musically inclined moose. She added that no food was left outside of her home that would have attracted the animal. Screen capture/Britta Schroeder/YouTube

HEALY, Alaska, May 11 (UPI) -- A musically inclined moose performed a miniature concert for an Alaska woman by playing with her wind chimes.

Britta Schroeder shared video of the talented moose outside the window of her home in Healy, as it brushed its head against the wind chime and created a musical tune.

"As I lay in bed this evening, I could hear my wind chime blowing up, but when I looked out the window, not even a blade of grass budged," Schroeder said.

She poked her head out the window to find the moose tugging at the string of her wind chime just outside.

Schroeder was not sure what drew the moose to her home, but assured that none of the containers seen in the video held any food.

"I should clarify that the blender and the red bucket in the video are part of a paper-making project and have no food, nor have ever had food, in either. The chest freezer is also locked," she wrote.

Once the moose was done with its brief, impromptu performance, it slowly made its way away from Schroeder's home.

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Here Are The Most Haunted Spots In All 50 States. They'll Give You Nightmares.

January 17, 2016

onlyinyourstate.com



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Every state has its fair share of locations rumored to be haunted. From abandoned asylums to creaky hotels, many haunted spots across the country are beyond eerie. Sure, many places across the country that have claimed to be haunted seem to be somewhat dubious, but there are those that have been well documented by paranormal experts. Here's a list of the most terrifying, haunted spots within each state.

Every state has its fair share of locations rumored to be haunted. From abandoned asylums to creaky hotels, many haunted spots across the country are beyond eerie. Sure, many places



1. Alabama: Sloss Furnaces in Birmingham

Mike Boening Photography/flickr
Sloss Furnaces is almost as old as Birmingham; construction began just 10 years after the founding of the city. Hundreds of steel workers toiled under the supervision of a tyrant nicknamed "Slag," a foreman who treated his crew badly. Over the years, many workers died in horrific accidents. One was dragged into the gears of one of the large flywheels; another fell into the molten steel and was incinerated.

Visitors to the abandoned furnaces

report sightings of phantoms (including one believed to be Slag himself), screams and even physical attacks.



2. Alaska: Kennecott Copper Mining Camp, Valdez-Cordova

D. Sikes/flickr

The ghosts of Kennecott camp and the rail lines going to and from the mines are so scary that even developers have been convinced to leave the area alone. Visitors report seeing ghosts and hearing screams and moans. In the 1990s, developers building homes along one of the railroad lines cancelled the project after too many construction workers quit. The workers reported almost constant screaming and wailing voices in the area, along with missing tools -- sometimes right from their tool belts.

Beth Oliver/flickr

The Jerome Grand Hotel was originally a hospital. It's said to be Arizona's most haunted buildings; guests report hearing crying, coughing and wailing in the halls. A bearded man



27. Nebraska: Annie Cook's Poor Farm

This Mansfield prison is home to some of the most violent specters in the state. Ghosts of rioting inmates who frequently fought each other to the death in overcrowded isolation cells are said to haunt the jail.

Christine Sorrels/Facebook

This Victorian mansion in Guthrie is a cozy bed and breakfast that looks so charming at first glance. It was previously a funeral home and after the owner renovated it, she soon found there were other occupants in the house. Doors would open and close, footsteps up and down the back staircase could be heard and toys were being played with at night. Legend says that the former residents daughter died in the home at the age of 8. They believe the ghosts are the former residents of the home.

Flickr/ Randy Kashka

Located in the town of Lafayette, this cemetery is more than a century old and is known to be haunted by a woman who was tried for witchcraft and hung there. It is said that before she



28. Nevada: Piper's Opera House

died she cursed the town and said that it would burn down three times (since then, the town has burnt down twice). Her restless spirit (and perhaps others as well) are known to haunt the grounds - walking in shadows, chasing people, evening screaming. There have even been accounts of visitors being physically attacked by ghosts.

Flickr/ Pablo Sanchez

We've all heard of Gettysburg, the historic battlefield in Pennsylvania that was the setting for one of the deadliest battles in the Civil War, but did you know it's home to numerous ghosts? To this day, visitors report



29. New Hampshire: Pine Hill Cemetery

hearing strange noises - moans, screams, gunfire, cannons - coming from anxious and unrestful ghosts.

Flickr/ Wil C. Fry

Located in Providence, the Biltmore Hotel is known as one of the most haunted hotels in the



30. New Jersey: Clinton Road

country. It was the inspiration for Stephen King's book 'Overlook Hotel', as well as Robert Bloch's 'Bates Motel'. Are you creeped out yet? The story behind the hotel is that it was opened by a satanist named Johan Leisse Weisskopf who planned the hotel to have weekly animal sacrifices, nude waitresses, and more. During the prohibition, locals and police officers drank and partied together there, which some believe had to



31. New Mexico: St. James Hotel

do with the many murders that happened in the hotel. The ghosts of the victims still haunt the premises, and it's said that late into the night people have heard raucous partying, laughing, and dancing - despite the bar being closed and empty. Rumor has it that more than one guest has even disappeared



32. New York: State Capitol Building

completely, never to be found.

Flickr/ Torrey Wiley

The Old Charleston Jail was opened in the early 19th century, and is said to be haunted by numerous notorious inmates, including Lavinia Fisher, the first female serial killer in the U.S. People have reported disembodied voices, objects moving without being touched, and other ghostly phenomena. The jail closed in 1939, and is still standings in decaying ruins.

Flickr/ Kent Kanouse

The historical Bullock Hotel in

Deadwood, South Dakota was opened by a man named Captain Seth Bullock in 1895, and is haunted to this day by that same man. Visitors have reported strange occurrences including shattering glasses, lights and faucets turning off and on, bodiless voices, and some have actually seen his apparition. Although the ghost is fairly active, many people feel assured that



33. North Carolina: Omni Grove Park Inn

his presence isn't malevolent.

Flickr/ Cameron Daigle

In Adams, Tennessee there is a cave called The Bell Witch Cave. The Bell Witch is a famous ghost who haunted the Bell family in the 19th century, and she still haunts the area today, and in particular the eerie cave near what used to be the Bell family's farm. Visitors have reported strange occurrences like disembodied voices, strange shadows, and apparitions, and it is said that if you take something from the cave - even a pebble or stick - you will be cursed.

Flickr/ Binomialphoto



34. North Dakota: The Children's Museum At Yunker Farm

The Baker Hotel is a Texas landmark located in Mineral Wells. The huge building has been abandoned for many years, but it's intricate, decaying shell still looms over the area. According to local legends, two spirits dominate the building - the ghost of a bloody woman who has been seen on the 7th floor, and the ghost of a man who was caught in an elevator and killed.

Edgar Zuniga Jr./flickr

The Rio Grande is haunted by several ghosts, but its most famous is The Purple



35. Ohio: Ohio State Reformatory

Lady, a woman who often appears in the restroom or on the main floor. She and her fiancé had an argument at the depot and she threw her ring onto the tracks. When she climbed down to retrieve the ring, she was hit and killed by a train. A dark man is also seen on the first floor, and security guards report lights flickering on and off, voices and heavy footsteps.

Flickr/ Scott McCracken

Emily's Bridge is located in Stowe, Vermont, and according to local legend, it is haunted by the ghost of a girl who tragically hung herself there after being

abandoned by her husband-to-be. Ghost-curious visitors from all over the country come to experience the eery phenomena. People have felt scratches and pokes, seen strange shapes in the shadows, and some have even taken pictures in which the form of a girl appears though no one was there at the time the photo was taken.



36. Oklahoma: Stone Lion Inn

Flickr/ Joseph Hunkins

Located in Mechanicsville, Cold Harbor Battlefield is the site of one of the last - and bloodiest - battles of the Civil War. The grounds are said to be haunted by the spirits of many of those who died, and many ghosts have been seen beside the trenches.

Flickr/ Braden

Point Defiance Park is located in Ruston, Washington. What may look like an ordinary park is actually said to be haunted by two ghosts. Visitors have reported hearing a young dead girl riding her bike in the middle

of the night, and other strange happenings. The pagoda seems to have the most paranormal activity, and people have experienced cold drafts and strange disembodied noises like footsteps and sighing.

Flickr/ Zach McCormick

This treatment facility for the mentally ill is a strange, haunted place where some horrible things came to pass, such as overcrowding and unethical experiments on patients, as in a number of American 19th and even 20th century psychiatric hospitals. The

gothic, abandoned building is now rotting in Weston, while ghosts dominate the premises. Paranormal experiences that have been reported include seeing the ghosts of many people who lived and died in the facility - doctors and patients alike.

Flickr/ clare_and_ben

Nelsen's Hall is located on Washington Island in Wisconsin. The historic pub is haunted by its original owner, Tom Nelson, who kept the bar open by claiming his drinks were medicinal during Prohibition. After he died at age 90, his ghost went on to haunt the premises, making footsteps in the upstairs



37. Oregon: Lafayette Cemetery



38. Pennsylvania: Gettysburg Battlefield

apartment, changing the radio station, and appearing in the women's bathroom.

Flickr/ Richard Elzey

According to local legend, the historic Occidental Hotel in Buffalo is haunted by a woman with long, dark hair and a white dress who died on the second floor. Visitors have reported moving



39. Rhode Island: The Biltmore Hotel

objects and furniture, strange bodiless noises, and have even seen the apparition outright.

Have you been to any of these haunted places? If so, did you experience any paranormal activity?

Ashley has lived in Oklahoma for 25 years. She is the Oklahoma staff writer for Only In Your State, busy mom of 3, internet entrepreneur, lover of God, family and OU football. She enjoys spending time golfing with her family and traveling to the beach.

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40. South Carolina: Old Charleston Jail



41. South Dakota: The Bullock Hotel



42. Tennessee: The Bell Witch Cave



43. Texas: The Baker Hotel



44. Utah: Rio Grande Depot, Salt Lake City



45. Vermont: *Emily's Bridge*



46. Virginia: *Cold Harbor Battlefield*



47. Washington: *Point Defiance Park*



48. West Virginia: Trans-Allegheny Asylum



49. Wisconsin: Nelsen's Hall



50. Wyoming: Occidental Hotel in Buffalo

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3. Arizona: Jerome Grand Hotel, Jerome

often appears on the second and third floors. Another ghost is believed to be the spirit of a former employee named Harvey, who may have been murdered and dumped into the elevator shaft in 1935. He is often seen in the stairwell or in the basement.



4. Arkansas: Mount Holly Cemetery, Little Rock

Allen Brewer/flickr
This large cemetery, founded in 1843, has plenty of paranormal activity. Visitors hear flute music, see people dressed in clothing

from the 19th century who vanish in front of their eyes, and witness grave statues moving of their own accord.



5. California: Winchester Mystery House, San Jose

Orin Blomberg/flickr

Sarah Winchester began building her home in San Jose after the death of her husband. She was convinced that her family was being haunted by the spirits of Native Americans and soldiers killed by the Winchester repeating rifle, manufactured by her husband's company. She built Winchester House to provide a place for all the spirits. She continued to build on to it until she died. Visitors report sightings of Mrs. Winchester in the house and on the grounds, as well as a number of

mysterious happenings such as doorknobs turning, footsteps and windows slamming.

Ken Lund/flickr

The Unsinkable Molly Brown is said to haunt her own home. Visitors smell roses or tobacco smoke and sometimes spot Molly, her husband, or her mother inside the home. Other paranormal activity includes piano keys moving without making a sound, strange shadows moving around and doors closing on their own.

LongLiveRock/ via Commons

The patients at Norwich State Hospital included many declared criminally insane after committing horrific crimes. During the time it was in operation, many people died there, either as the result of accidents or by suicide, and reports of serious abuse such as beatings, harsh restraints and sexual assault were common. After the hospital was abandoned of screams,



6. Colorado: Molly Brown House, Denver

moans, footsteps and the presence of ghostly apparitions. Though the hospital has been demolished, the grounds are still reportedly haunted with the souls of psychiatric patients. Mike Mahaffie/flickr

Fort Delaware is over 150 years old, and reportedly full of spirits. The most famous resides in the kitchen and is often seen by volunteers and visitors. While reenactment volunteers work in the kitchen, another woman dressed in 19th century clothing joins them, appearing to nod her approval before vanishing. Mysterious lights and sightings of



7. Connecticut: Norwich State Hospital, Norwich

a Confederate soldier on the ramparts are common.

Ebyabe/via Commons

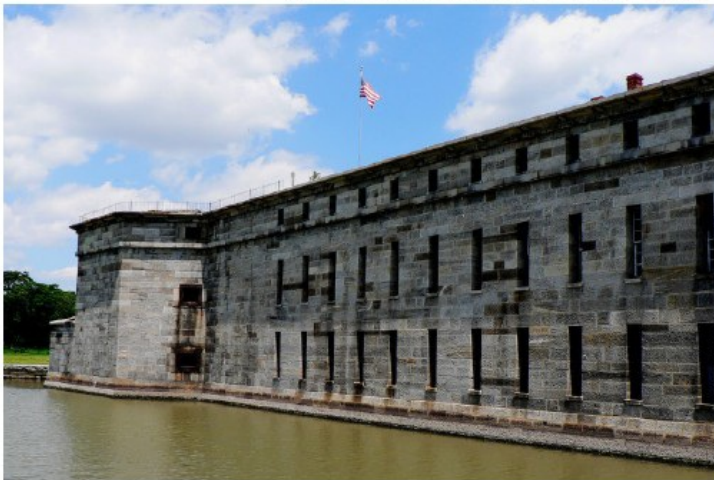
John and Marena May built this home in 1855, but Mr. May died of tuberculosis three years later. Marena

remarried but later died in childbirth while giving birth to her daughter Jessie, who died at age three. All three are said to haunt the house, which is now a museum. Guides hear children's laughter and cries, see ghostly visions of Marena or John and report items being moved around the house (particularly a doll that belonged to Jessie).

amygibbs81/flickr

This haunted cemetery is home to many spirits. Visitors hear the voices of people chatting and socializing. They

also report being chased by a pack of ghostly dogs, who growl and bark, seemingly nipping at their heels. One famous ghost, that of Gracie Watson, who died of pneumonia at age six, is reported to cry and is occasionally seen running through the cemetery. This cemetery is reportedly one of the most haunted places in the entire country.



8. Delaware: Fort Delaware, Pea Patch Island



9. Florida: May-Stringer House, Brooksville

Amber Porter/flickr

The Pali Lookout is the location of a brutal mass murder. When King Kamehameha I won a battle against Maui chief Kalanikupule, he drove the chief and his 400 soldiers off the side of the cliff to their deaths. At night, visitors report hearing screams, moans and voices from below.

Old Idaho Penitentiary Site/GooglePlus

Old Idaho State Penitentiary, located in Boise, is considered by many to be the most haunted building in the state. In its 101 years of operation, it became one of the most violent penitentiaries in America. Today all the inmates are gone (the living ones, anyway). Unexplained noises, overwhelming feelings of grief and paranormal activities make this place extremely haunted.

Mark Bergner/Wikipedia

Beginning in the 1970s, visitors to this Midlothian cemetery have seen orbs, apparitions, phantom vehicles, and even a floating, shrinking, and vanishing phantom farmhouse. A mysterious black dog and figures in monks' robes also have been seen. Investigations by ghost researchers have turned up ghostly images and electronic voice phenomena.

hannah.house.9887/Facebook

According to legend, this Indianapolis house was a stop on the Underground Railroad that helped slaves escape north to Canada prior to the American Civil War. One night a fire broke out and a group of slaves were burned to death. Mr Hannah, the owner, buried their ashes in the basement of the home. To this day, the ghosts of these slaves haunt the home. Moans, shadows, whispers, and cold spots have been experienced in the basement.

Jennifer Kirkland/Flickr



10. Georgia: Bonaventure Cemetery, Savannah



11. Hawaii: Nu'uuanu Pali Lookout on the island of O'ahu

In 1912, the town of Villisca became notorious when an entire family was murdered in their sleep by an unknown assailant with an ax. The house is rumored to be haunted by the ghosts of the murdered family, and the house is available for lockdowns if any paranormal enthusiasts are looking for a thrill.

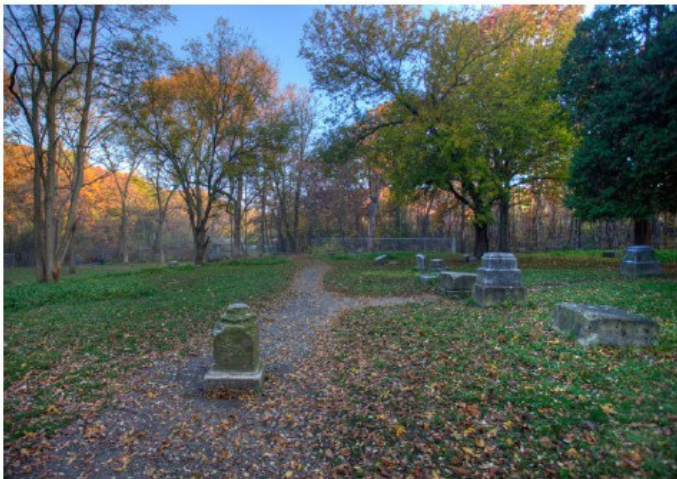


12. Idaho: Old Idaho State Penitentiary

Ayleen Gaspar/Flickr

Rumored to be a gateway to hell, Stull Cemetery is said to be a very actively haunted place. Next to an abandoned church in Stull, the cemetery is the subject of many legends, some over 100 years old. Satan himself is rumored to appear here twice a year. Visitors say they have been grabbed by something invisible, or suffered memory loss and other maladies while visiting the cemetery.

The-Waverly-Hills-Sanatorium/Facebook
Located in Louisville, Waverly Hills



13. Illinois: Bachelor's Grove Cemetery

Sanitarium opened in 1910, to house the victims of the Tuberculosis epidemic. The building has housed over 63,000 deaths, with many of their spirits remaining behind. Ghosts seem to wander every inch of this building and grounds. Witnesses here report unexplained lights, apparitions, shadowy forms and other various phenomena. Creepy is putting it mildly, as this site is considered one of the most haunted places on earth.

cjbrown.com



14. Indiana: Hannah House

Known as one of America's most haunted homes, this plantation is said to be haunted by the individuals who had to endure slavery here. It is located in St. Francisville and believed to be the site of 10 murders. Many visitors, as well as employees in the hotel, still hear the dying footsteps of the former owner who died on the stairs, after being shot by by a stranger. Many have reported capturing

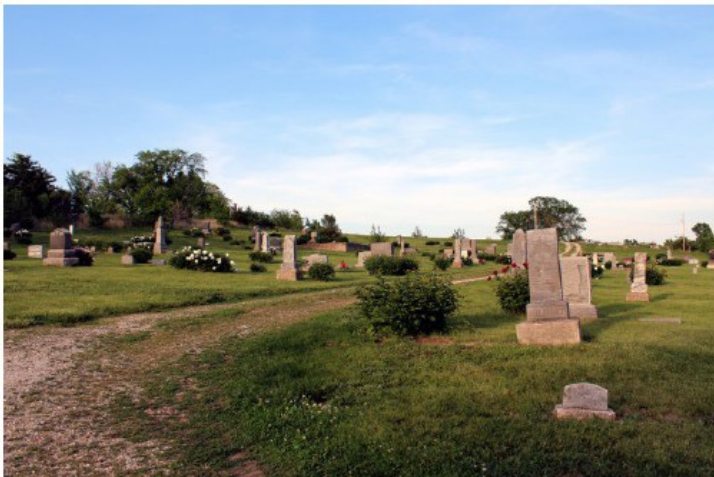
photographs of former slaves while around the plantation.

Strand-Cinema/Facebook

Strand Cinema in Skowhegan, is considered the most haunted place in Maine. Patrons have reported everything from sightings to physical contact at the theater. In 1978, the building was



15. Iowa: Villisca Ax Murder House



16. Kansas: Stull Cemetery



17. Kentucky: Waverly Hills Sanatorium

modified and workers began taking the brunt of the ghost's anger. They were shocked by electric tools that were not plugged in. Tools were thrown about and stains were splattered all over newly painted walls. A shadowed apparition is reported to have thrown a piece of balcony ceiling tile into the sets and hand prints have been found on the movie screen.

Christina Castaneda/Facebook

Point Lookout was used as a prisoner encampment/hospital during the Civil War in Scotland, Maryland. It is estimated that over 8,000 died during their stay at the camp. Many campers who camp at Point Lookout State Park encounter the ghosts of Confederate soldiers either walking across the roads or walking alongside of them. Several paranormal activities have been experienced in the Lighthouse itself, including pictures taken of ghosts, various frightening EVPs, and blatant encounters with apparitions.

cellarwalls.com

There's no haunted place in the Commonwealth more famous than the Bridgewater Triangle—a 200-mile space in southeastern Massachusetts that some believe to be the center of weird, paranormal activities. Many of the mysterious occurrences revolve around Hockomock Swamp, a 16,550-acre wetland located in the Freetown Fall River State Forest. The Hockomock Swamp is known to serve as a dumping ground for murder victims, and reports of cults practicing black magic.

Shawn Roach/Flickr

Traverse City State Hospital, located in Traverse City, operated for more than 100 years and during those years, many stories have evolved about restless spirits and patients who never checked out of the hospital. Visitors report feelings of ominous and oppressive feelings. There is said to be a portal to Hell which can be found under "The Hippy Tree," located on the trails behind the building. There are



18. Louisiana: The Myrtles Plantation



19. Maine: Strand Cinema



20. Maryland: Point Lookout

reports of disembodied screams and voices echoing through the empty halls. Lights are said to turn on and off by themselves. This is made even more frightening by the fact that there has not been electricity running through the building for many years.

Yelp/Angela S.

Now a restaurant, the manor was once a private home to wealthy wholesaler Joseph Forepaugh and his family. Both Joseph and the maid, Molly, died in the home and are said to haunt the premises today. Legend has it that the two were having a torrid affair.

Riddled with guilt, Joseph shot himself in the head; a heartbroken Molly hanged herself days later. While Joseph seems to simply stroll the grounds, Molly tends to terrify guests, pounding walls and exploding glasses. They say she likes to spend time at social events and her ghostly figure can be seen in a recent wedding photo.

Flickr/Steve Martin

This magnificent Meridian music hall is home to some very talents guests. The entertainment is out of this world!

Singing specters grace the space and

perform when the main hall is quiet. Visitors have also reported cold spots and a feeling of being tapped on the left shoulder.

Wikipedia/MWKruse

This Kansas City spot is the oldest continuously operating hotel in the United States west of the Mississippi River. Built in 1888, the hotel is home to several spirits. Betsy Ward, who lived



21. Massachusetts: Bridgewater Triangle

in room 505, was found dead in her bathtub. Many strange occurrences have been reported in this room over the years. A man named Fred Lightner is said to haunt a different room, and a young girl wearing a Victorian-era dress has been seen wandering around on the fourth floor.

Flickr/Frank DiBona

Located near Billings, hundreds of soldiers lost their lives on this land. According to some visitors and even park service employees, many of these soldiers still linger. Witnesses have described hearing battle cries, rifle

shots and bugles, with several reporting actual ghost sightings.

Flickr/RLEVANS

Poor houses were never known for being the most welcoming places. This Lincoln County poor farm was among the worst. A poor farm was a place where the destitute could receive housing in exchange for labor. At Annie Cook's many residents were worked to death - literally. It is said that Annie Cook's ghost remains behind along with several of the souls she tortured here.

Wikipedia/VivaVerdi

This Virginia City icon has been open since 1885, though haunted happenings have only been reported since renovating in 2003. While there are no reports of tragic deaths, it seems several former patrons have stayed behind to continue enjoying the shows. Two of the most often reported ghost sightings involve a man with a handlebar mustache and a lady in a blue dress.

Flickr/Don Shall

This Hollis cemetery has been called

one of the most haunted places in New England. Abel Blood is the most notorious ghost, though there are many. It is said the image on his gravestone inverts itself at night and that he also wanders the grounds. Floating orbs, strange tapping sounds, and other supernatural anomalies have been reported at Pine Hill.



22. Michigan: Traverse City State Hospital



23. Minnesota: Forepaugh Restaurant



24. Mississippi: Grand Opera House

Wikipedia/Daniel Case

This West Milford road is notorious for its dark tales and haunted happenings. There are stories of KKK meetings, Devil Worshipers and a ghost boy. What is fact is that notorious mafia hitman Richard "Iceman" Kuklinski ditched one of his victims off the side of this road. The discovery of the body led to his eventual arrest.

Wikipedia/Daniel Schwen

The ghost in this Cimarron hotel is far from friendly. He is so violent that room 18 (where he is said to have been

murdered) is padlocked. Should it be disturbed, he is said to wreak havoc on the hotel for weeks.

Flickr/Wally Gobetz

Several ghosts are rumored to have haunted these halls, including two former presidents. Legend has it that a ghost of a man who committed suicide in 1890, and a watchman who died in a fire in 1911 both haunt the grounds.

Wikipedia/JillJelliDonutWhatever

This lovely hotel is haunted by the most

famous ghost in the state - The Pink Lady. Whether murder or suicide, she fell to her death and her spirit still lingers. Don't fret, she's said to be very friendly.



25. Missouri: Savoy Hotel



26. Montana: Little Bighorn Battlefield

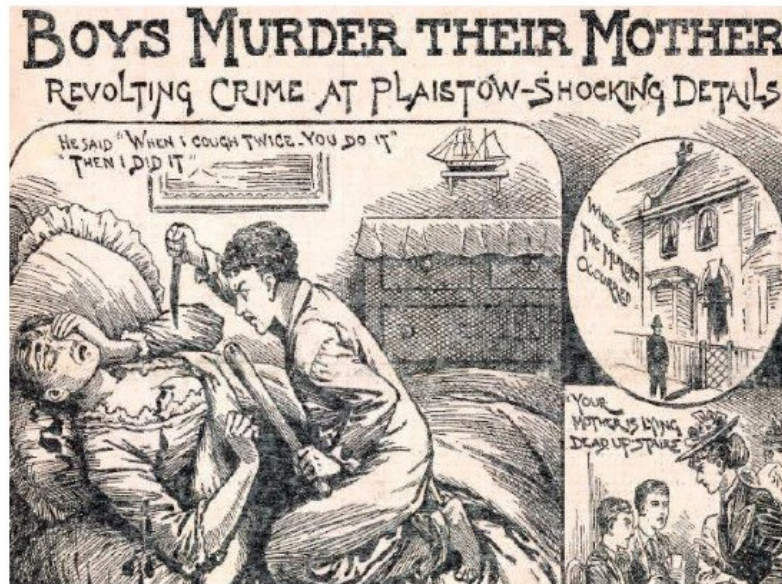
Image/Children'sMuseumAtYunkerFarm

This is such a fun place, it seems not all the children want to leave. The museum is said to be haunted by the ghost of a boy who drowned in the well. The elevators are also said to operate on their own.

Flickr/Rain0925

The untold story of a mother brutally murdered by her young sons in Victorian England

It was a crime that shocked turn-of-the-century London – a mother murdered by her two sons. But what was the story behind the lurid headlines?



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By Kate Summerscale

22 APRIL 2016 • 10:02AM

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/books/authors/the-untold-story-of-a-mother-brutally-murdered-by-her-young-sons/>

I came across the Coombes case in an old newspaper. ‘Alleged matricide by boys,’ announced the London Daily News on July 18, 1895. ‘A shocking story of the murder of a mother is reported from Plaistow.’

The paper explained that the decomposing body of a 37-year-old woman had been found on a bed in a house in east London while her two sons, aged 12 and 13, played cards with a friend downstairs.

- *“Robert and Nattie had been sharing the house with their mother’s corpse for 10 days, during which time they had been to Lord’s to watch the cricket”*

The younger boy, Nathaniel, bolted when the police arrived, but his brother, Robert, stayed put. He promptly confessed to the crime.

‘That there are thousands of parents – both fathers and mothers – whose conduct to their children is worse than barbarous, the records of this Society’s work during but a few years places beyond doubt.’

Robert Coombes was found ‘guilty but insane’ at the Old Bailey in September 1895, and sentenced to be held indefinitely in Broadmoor criminal lunatic asylum.

The 13-year-old boy was still smiling as he made the journey to Berkshire by train, handcuffed to two Holloway warders. No further reports about him appeared in the press.



Robert Coombes as an adult in Australia around the late 1930s

To understand Robert Coombes’ crime, I realised, I would need to find out what became of him and Nattie. I went to the Broadmoor archive to gather information about Robert’s experiences in the asylum, and on learning that he had been discharged after 17 years I searched the internet for further clues.

Eventually, I found a picture of his gravestone, among hundreds of images on a website about Australian cemeteries. The inscription on the stone indicated that Robert had served in the First World War, and with the help of records in Australian archives I discovered that in 1915 he had been a stretcher-bearer in the Dardanelles.



On set: The 2014 ITV adaptation of
The Suspicions of Mr Whicher
CREDIT: ITV/REX/SHUTTERSTOCK

I pictured him on the ridges of Gallipoli, watching disaster unfold: he had been obliged to bear witness to horrific events before scrambling forward to tend to the injured, to salvage something from a scene of catastrophe.

Nattie had become a ship's stoker while Robert was in Broadmoor, and he served throughout the war with the Royal Australian Navy. Afterwards he and Robert were reunited in New South Wales.

Nattie settled in Newcastle, near Sydney, while Robert set up as a farmer in the north of the state. His neighbours knew little about his history.

They were aware only that he was English, that he had served at Gallipoli, and that he had been awarded the Military Medal. If he was silent about his past, so were many who had seen horrors in the Great War.

The Wicked Boy, by Kate Summerscale (Bloomsbury, £16.99), is released on 5 May. Pre-order it now for £14.99 plus p&p from Telegraph Bookshop :

<http://books.telegraph.co.uk/Product/Kate-Summerscale/The-Wicked-Boy--The-Mystery-of-a-Victorian-Child-Murderer/15112080>

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No. 1641. [REGISTERED FOR CIRCULATION IN THE
UNITED KINGDOM AND ABROAD.]

SATURDAY, JULY 27, 1895.

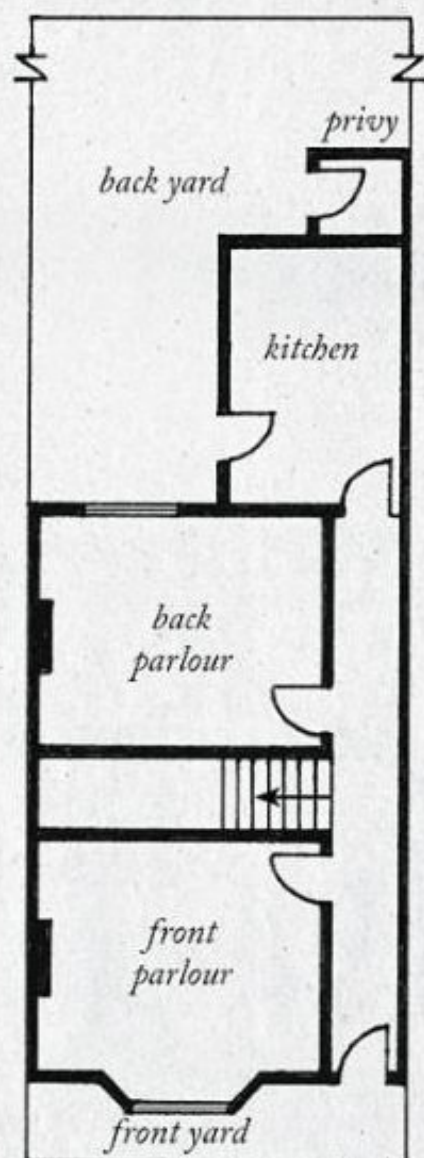
Price One Penny.

BOYS MURDER THEIR MOTHER

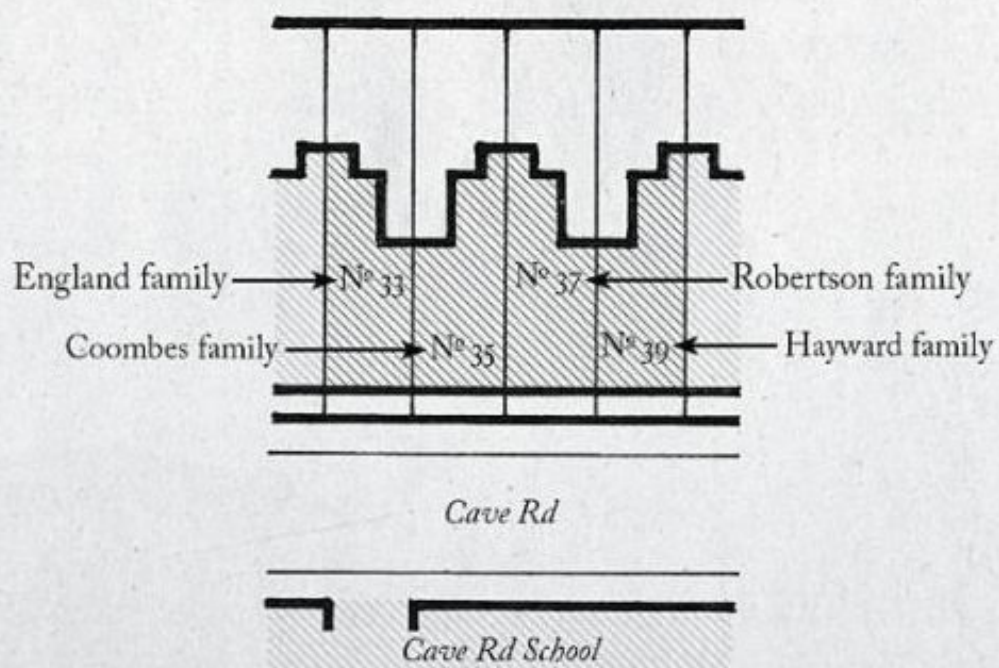
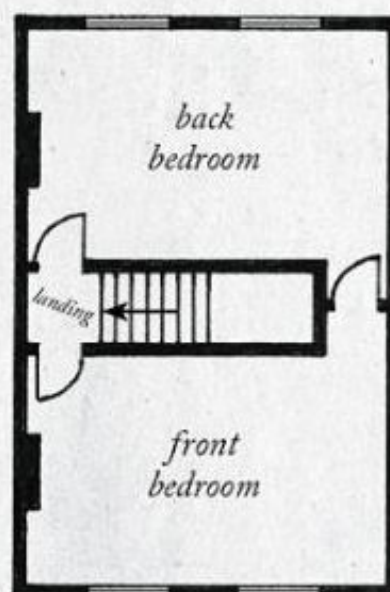
REVOLTING CRIME AT PLAISTOW-SHOCKING DETAILS

HE SAID "WHEN I COUGH TWICE YOU DO IT"
"THEN I DID IT"



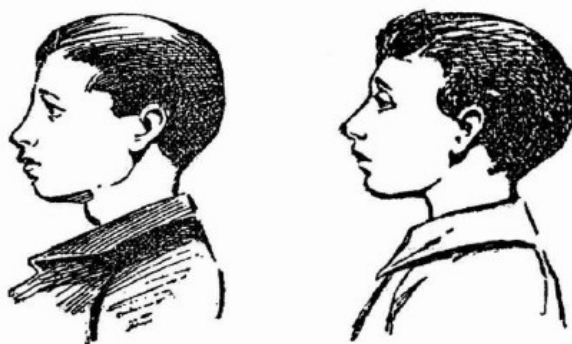


N^o 35 CAVE ROAD



'I did it,' Robert told the constable. 'My brother Nattie got a hiding for stealing some food, and Ma was going to give me one.'

So Nattie said that he would stab her, but as he could not do it himself he asked me to do it.' Robert admitted that he and Nattie had been sharing the house with their mother's corpse for 10 days, during which time they had been to Lord's to watch the cricket, gone fishing at Southend-on-Sea, and seen a play at the theatre.



Newspaper sketches of Robert Coombes (left) and his brother, Nathaniel 'Nattie' Coombes, in court.

A local paper, the Stratford Express, described the murder as 'the most horrible, the most awful and revolting crime that we have ever been called upon to record.'

'In the wildest dreams of fiction, nothing has ever been depicted which equals in loathsomeness this story of sons playing at cards in a room which the dead body of their murdered mother filled with the stench of corruption.'

Both boys were charged with murder and remanded in Holloway jail. Some of the news reports dubbed the murder of Emily Coombes 'The Plaistow Horror'; others called it 'The Plaistow Tragedy'.

The matricide and its aftermath did seem to be both a tragedy and a horror show, a tale to make you recoil in disgust and to pull you close in pity. I was fascinated by the Coombes boys.



The Illustrated Police News reported the murder of Emily Coombes by her 13-year-old son, Robert, in sensational detail

CREDIT: THE BRITISH LIBRARY BOARD

When they appeared at the magistrates' court, Nattie sobbed and shook with fear while Robert smiled and glanced coolly over at the bank of journalists scribbling down the details of the crime. He seemed hollow, light, scoured clean of feeling.

At their Old Bailey trial, Nattie stammered as he answered the barristers' questions – he had been discharged so that he could testify against his brother – while Robert maintained his air of detached mockery, occasionally making comical faces at the judge.

The Coombes family's neighbours described Robert as a clever and musically talented child, well-spoken and well-dressed. His parents had been proud of his accomplishments, they said, and his teachers described him as obedient and unusually bright.

I was baffled by why the brothers had plotted to kill their mother, and decided to find out what I could about their childhood.



Kate Summerscale, the award-winning author and journalist who wrote *The Wicked Boy*

CREDIT: SUTTON-HIBBERT/REX/SHUTTERSTOCK

In order to reconstruct the boys' lives in Plaistow, I read newspaper reports of their arrest and detention, and a transcript of the two-day murder trial at the Old Bailey.

At the National Archives in Kew I read a file containing the signed statements of the pawnbrokers with whom the boys had pledged valuables, an aunt who had discovered their crime, teachers at the schools they had attended, a shipping cashier from whom they had tried to scam money, the owner of a coffee-

house at which they dined.

- *“The prosecution tried to ascribe the murder to Robert’s avid consumption of ‘penny dreadfuls’”*

The school registers I found in an east London archive confirmed that both brothers were capable and compliant schoolboys. Robert had graduated from elementary school a few weeks before the murder and had been persuaded by his mother to take a job as a ‘plater’s boy’ at the local shipyard.

His boss was pleased with his work in the yard, but Robert seems to have hated it – against his mother’s wishes, he quit the job after a fortnight.



L-r: Robert and Nattie’s mother, Emily; the boys’ father, Robert; their friend, John Fox, another witness.

I visited the neighbourhoods that the brothers had frequented. The Coombes family’s house in Plaistow had been demolished, but most of the terrace was still standing, as were the walls of the boys’ school playground.

I walked down the Barking Road to the now defunct Victoria and Albert docks and the site of the shipyard at which Robert had briefly worked, and I tried to imagine being there in 1895, when the district thundered with machines, reeked of coal tar and carcasses, explosives and glue.

- *“Most people in any case believed that parents were entitled to punish their children by whatever means they felt necessary”*

The docks had been the focus of a famous strike in 1889, and the surrounding neighbourhood was known for its radical politics.

The local MP in 1895 was James Keir Hardie, the founder of the Independent Labour Party, who was

campaigning in the streets of Plaistow in the days after Emily Coombes's death. In this part of east London, wrote the novelist Arthur Morrison, 'the air was electrical'; there was, according to the Liberal MP Charles Masterman, 'everywhere a stirring and an agitation'.

'London over the border', as it was known, was the industrial hub of the empire and a new metropolis of the poor.

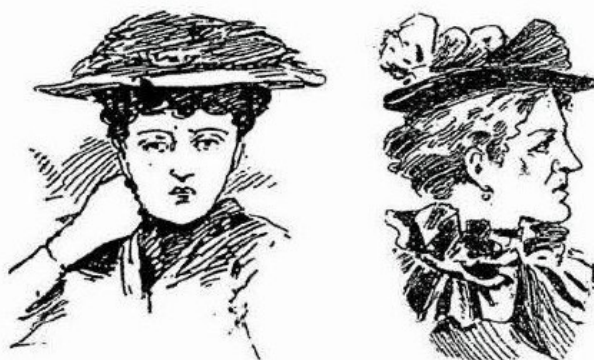
Here more than anywhere in England, it seemed that the world was transforming as the century turned, mutating at unnatural speed, throwing up freaks and portents, precocities and perversions. It was a time of tumult and foreboding.



Paddy Considine as Jack Whicher, in the 2014 ITV adaptation of *The Suspicions of Mr Whicher*, by Kate Summerscale
CREDIT: ITV/REX/SHUTTERSTOCK

Robert and Nattie's father worked on a ship that ferried cattle from New York to the London docks. In the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich I examined the crew agreements for several of the voyages he made, from which I was able to calculate his income and to date his trips – Mr Coombes was at sea for almost six out of every seven weeks, and was halfway across the Atlantic, en route to America, at the time of his wife's death.

Only when he reached New York on July 21 did he learn of her murder and his sons' arrest. He was handed a newspaper carrying a report of the crime, which he read 'in a dazed sort of way', reported the New York press; afterwards he was 'prostrated with grief and horror'.



Witnesses Mary Jane Burrage (left), a friend of Emily's, and the boys' aunt, Emily.

When he recovered from the shock, Mr Coombes gave interviews to a few American news-papers, in which he emphasised Robert's 'morbid' disposition. 'My elder boy has an abnormally developed brain,' he said.

'I was so informed by my family physician, who told me that Robert must be carefully watched. There was always something peculiar about him.' Mr Coombes insisted that his younger son had played no part in the murder.

It emerged at the Old Bailey that both Robert and his mother had been treated for nervous complaints. Robert had suffered from headaches and 'excitability' since the age of three, according to his father, while Emily 'was a very excitable woman from the first, who very frequently laughed and cried at the same time'.

The family doctor confirmed that Mrs Coombes was 'hysterical', 'very emotional', with 'a weak and nervous disposition', and that Robert had been prey to an 'irresistible impulse' to run away from home.

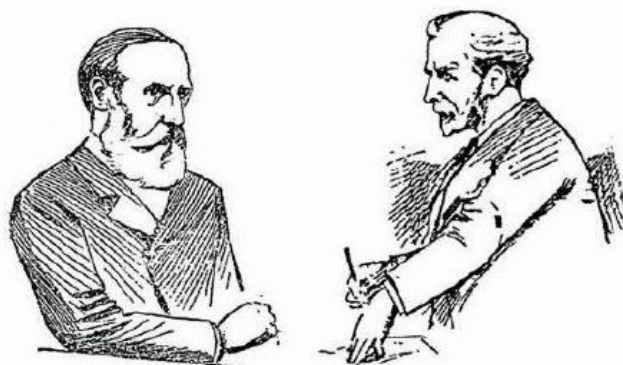
The prosecution tried to ascribe the murder to his avid consumption of 'penny dreadfuls', while the doctor in Holloway jail argued that Robert had been afflicted by 'homicidal mania' when he killed Emily Coombes.

The press, too, debated whether Robert was mad or bad. Only one publication argued that the crime might have sprung from tensions within the family: specifically, from Robert's relationship with his mother.

'Of the dead, we speak no ill in courts,' noted the *Child's Guardian*, the journal of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC).

'Of the dead, in this particular case, we know no ill to speak, but we are of the opinion that it is of great public concern to know what were the relations of the dead mother and her murderous child.'

The Child's Guardian suggested, as the lawyers had not, that Robert had assaulted Emily Coombes because she was physically brutal. This, after all, was what Robert had said.



Witnesses John Hewson, the chief cashier of the shipping line for which their father worked (left), and Detective Inspector Mellish

He told the police that he had decided to kill his mother because she had beaten Nattie and threatened them both. He told the doctor in Holloway that he had killed her because she had thrown knives at Nattie and warned that she would stick a hatchet in his head.

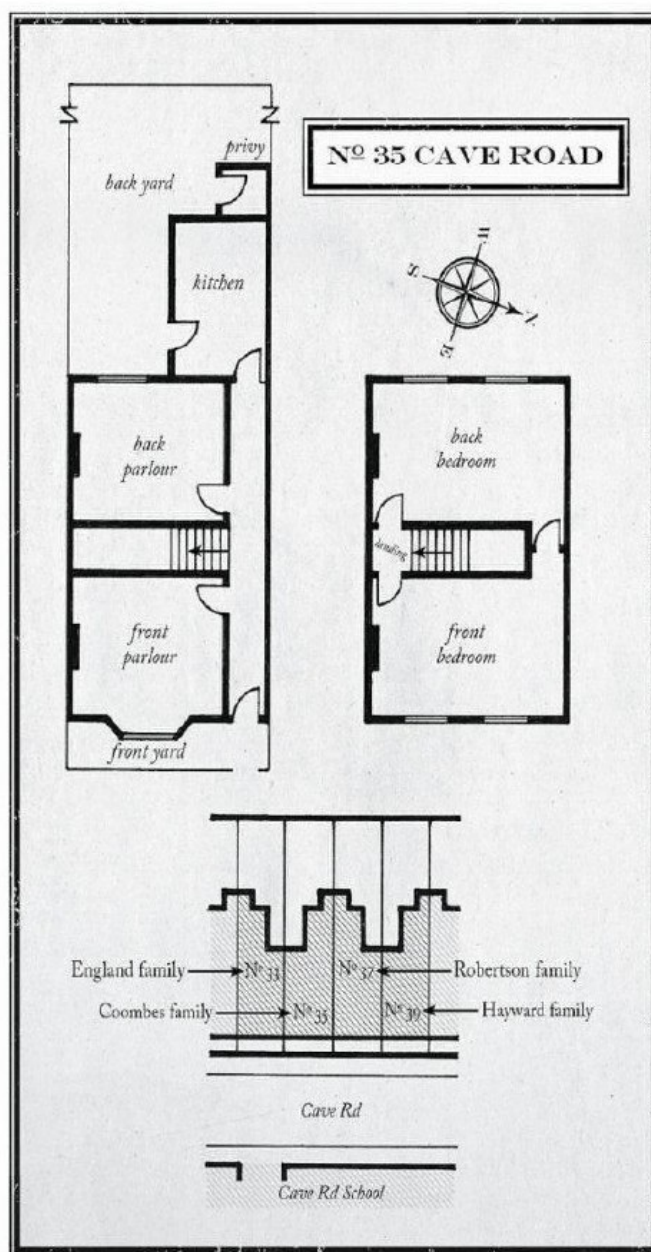
The Child's Guardian pointed out that Nattie had colluded in the murder plan. 'Was he, too, insane?' it asked sceptically.

○ *"It was unseemly to speak ill of the dead, especially of a murdered woman"*

Legislation had been passed to protect children from violent parents – the Children's Acts of 1889 and 1894 stipulated that physical correction should be 'reasonable' and 'within the bounds of moderation' – but neither the police, the coroner, the solicitor nor the magistrate in the Coombes case seemed to have inquired into the frequency, force or emotion with which Emily beat her boys.

As the Child's Guardian suggested, this was in part because it was unseemly to speak ill of the dead, especially of a murdered woman: whatever she had done, she had not deserved this.

Most people in any case believed that parents were entitled to punish their children by whatever means they felt necessary; and the Coombes family appeared to be a respectable, churchgoing household, neither dissipated nor desperate.



The Coombes' house, in relation to their neighbours on Cave Road

None the less, the NSPCC, which had been prosecuting parents for cruelty since its inception in 1884, had no difficulty in believing the worst. 'That brute force begets brute force, and injustice injustice, is beyond doubt,' it observed.

Canadian Mountie Tortured and Starved 'Possessed' Son: Had Priest Perform Exorcism on Demon Child

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Canadian Mountie Tortured and Starved 'Possessed' Son: Had Priest Perform Exorcism on Demon Child
April 29, 2016

Canadian Mountie Tortured and Starved 'Possessed' Son: Had Priest Perform Exorcism on Demon Child

Erin Fitzgerald



Canadian Mountie tortures and starves possessed son after priest performs exorcism

A Canadian Mountie tortured and starved his 11-year-old son because he thought that he was possessed. The Mountie further asked his brother, who was also a priest, to perform an exorcism on his son because he thought there was a demon living inside him.

The Mountie is now on trial. On Wednesday, he told the court his chilling testimony. He even considered himself "the victim" and claimed an exorcism was the last option, for his son was out of control.

"I thought the devil's inside him. I saw his eyes and heard his voice."

The Mountie's wife is also on trial for failing to care for his basic needs and also for restricting their son, however, she was unwilling to testify.

It was reported on *Ottawa Citizen* that the Mountie admitted to performing an exorcism on the child sometime prior to 2012 and thereafter had the child chained up in the basement. He further admitted to burning his shackled, naked son with a barbecue lighter to punish him for "impure thoughts."

When he was asked about the exorcism on the third day of court, the Mountie made the comment that his son "reminded him of the girl in the 1973 horror film, 'The Exorcist.'"

The #devil's in the details:: <https://t.co/Qvgom9HVk4> #Exorcism #Catholic #Pope
pic.twitter.com/RFXh32TTz6

— Prophecy News (@prophecyXnews) April 15, 2016

The boy, now 14, tells investigators that he believed the exorcism was performed in his home because he recalled his father and the priest performing a Rite of Exorcism using a crucifix that had been on the kitchen wall.

While the boy's parents were out shopping, the boy, who was 13 at the time and only weighed 50 pounds, escaped from his chains and went searching for water. Doctors said that the boy nearly starved to death.

Michael Boyce, Crown Attorney, asked the Mountie about the horrific punishment when he burned his

naked son's genitals and he appeared nervous as he testified.

"I was in a deep fog. I didn't appreciate what I was doing to my son."

The Mountie further stated that he didn't know what he had done was morally wrong and continued to blame his mental capacity, as a doctor previously said that he had PTSD prior to his arrest in February 2013.

The Mountie continued to use his troubled childhood as excuses for his PTSD, including growing up in Lebanon, seeing dead bodies, bombs and also claimed that he was raped as a young boy, *National Post* reports.

It was firmly reported by the prosecutor that none of these childhood problems ever came up until after his arrest and that he easily aced his Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) exams.

Last year, the priest testified and supported his brother. He claimed that he had memory problems due to his profession because he is trained to clear out facts, such as he did after each confession he attended to.



[Photo by Gerald Herbert/AP Images]

The prosecutor said that the Mountie exaggerated his son's behavior to torture and abuse him. Further, the Priest only heard about the boy's "bad behavior" from the father.

Both the Mountie and the stepmother have been charged with forcible confinement, aggravated assault and failure to provide the child with necessities. The Mountie is currently suspended without pay and both are free on bail. Furthermore, the Mountie has been charged with sexual assault causing bodily harm, as well as three counts of assault with weapon. The stepmother has also been charged with one count of assault with weapon.

The stepmother admitted in a 2013 interview that she did feel guilty for not protecting her son. During the testimony on Wednesday, the Mountie did say the stepmother did not witness any of the alleged abuse.

The Mountie is now on cross-examination as the trial continues. Publication bans the identity of the accused to protect the minor child involved in this

case.

Erin Fitzgerald

Tags: Canadian Mountie tortures son, Couple starves child, Father burns son's genitals, Possessed child

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Mrs. Surratt's House is Haunted - Haunted Ohio Books hauntedohiobooks.com

This is the official website of the 7-volume Haunted Ohio series and the Ghosts of the Past series by Ohio author Chris Woodyard

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*The Surratt Boarding house, Matthew Brady, Library of Congress images
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cwpb.03432>*

It's one of the many mysteries surrounding President Lincoln's assassination: Was Mrs. Mary Surratt innocent or guilty? She owned the boarding house where Booth and the other conspirators met. It was said that President Johnson refused clemency because she "kept the nest that hatched the egg." Mrs. Surratt's son, John H. Surratt, was a Confederate spy and was actively involved in a plot to kidnap Lincoln, although he always claimed he drew the line at murder. He fled the country when the others were arrested and I am not aware that he made any attempt to proclaim his mother's innocence or prevent her execution.

I have to confess that, innocent or guilty, I have always felt a touch of sympathy for Mrs. Surratt. She was married to a brutal alcoholic husband who was hauled up on a charge of bastardy for an illegitimate son and who spent profligately on his grandiose schemes, despite apparently being a lousy businessman. Her son abandoned her to the gallows (although, to be fair, any protestations of her innocence he might have made would probably have been discounted) and her daughter Annie, who had a breakdown after she was unable to reach President Johnson to beg for mercy for her mother, suffered depression and anxiety the rest of her life. Some historians have suggested that the trials and executions of the conspirators were indecently hastened so that no one would look too closely at plotters within the government itself. Others have criticized the validity of the trial itself and the credibility of the witnesses against the lady. Mrs. Surratt's ghost, either wracked with her innocence or tortured by guilt, had every reason to still walk.

Mrs. Surratt's House Haunted.

[Washington Correspondence *Boston Post*.]

There is a three-story brick tenement, in the middle of a block, fronting upon one of Washington's lesser thoroughfares, that is making itself peculiarly obnoxious to timid people, and ridiculous to the stout-hearted. The building in question is none other than that belonging to Mrs. Surratt, executed as one of the conspirators of the assassination, and in which she was apprehended and led forth for accusation and the gallows. In the course of settlement of her estate, the house in question was offered for sale, and even then the public seemed shy and indifferent to the purchase, and so it came that a property, worthy, by moderate comparison \$10,000, fell under the hammer at the insignificant sum of \$4,600. The new

landlord, therefore, instituted such improvements as completely changed the aspect of the property and all but transferred its site, and in the course of time came a tenant; but not to remain. In less than six weeks, the lessee had flown from beneath the roof, forfeited his year's rent, and was ready to swear with chattering teeth that his nervous system was shattered for a lifetime.

Others succeeded to the occupancy of the house he had vacated, in turn, to make a shuddering exit. Mrs. Surratt's house is haunted. There can be no reasonable doubt upon the subject. She herself persists in treading its halls, and perambulating the premises in the dead of night, clad in those self-same robes of serge in which she suffered the penalty of the law. In costume, she differs from the "woman in white" unmistakably, but that the general effect is none the less thrilling and altogether fatal to the composure of the observer, is positively averred by each successive occupant of the mansion. People who reside within adjoining walls are not troubled with either sights or sounds, but they begin to have a wholesome dread of the mansion in their midst, and have actually procured a reduction of their rental upon the ground of exposure to an unabatable nuisance. Thus the whole of a very common-place neighborhood is infected with a fancy that keeps them within doors of nights, and causes the local juveniles to abandon their games in the courtyards with the sinking of the sun.

Plain Dealer [Cleveland, OH] 5 December 1866: p. 2

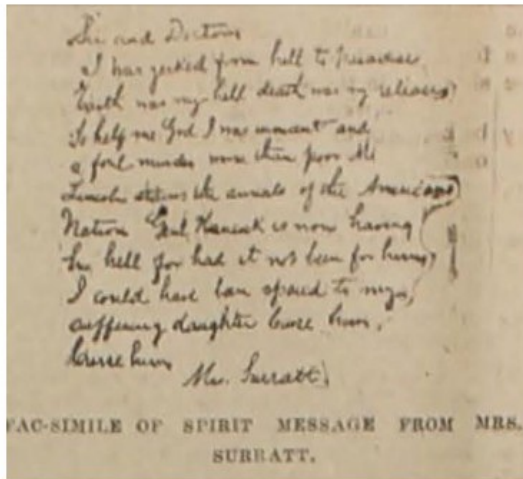
The building, 541 H Street in Washington, D.C., is on the National Register of Historic Places and is now being used as a restaurant. Mrs. Surratt, who went to the gallows wearing full mourning, including a heavy black veil, made an ideal Woman in Black ghost.

Even long after the assassination, Spiritualist groupies were eager to capture messages from the dead conspirators, whom they assumed were standing in line for a chance to tell their side of the story. I was intrigued to find a communication from Mrs. Surratt at a séance held by our old friend Dr. Theodor Hansmann, whom we have met before name-dropping about his "spirit friends," who included Noah, John Wilkes Booth, Queen Louise of Prussia, Confucius, Robert E. Lee, and George Washington. This bitter message came during a slate-writing session.

Mrs. Surratt's message was put in the lower left-hand corner of the slate in a very close, small hand. It was as follows:

"Sir and Doctor—I was jerked from hell to paradise. Earth was my hell; death was my release. So help me God I was innocent, and a foul murder, worse than poor Mr. Lincoln's, stains the annals of the American nation. Gen. Hancock [who carried out the execution and blocked a last-minute writ of *habeas corpus* from Mrs. Surratt's attorneys] is now having his hell, for had it not been for him I could have been spared to my suffering daughter. Curse him! Curse him!

"Mrs. Surratt."

The Progressive Thinker 11 March 1893

The slate message from Mrs. Surratt.

There is another Mary Surratt House: the structure built as a tavern by Mary's husband and which formed the nucleus of Surrattville, Maryland. It is now a museum run by the Surratt Society, an organization which studies Lincoln conspiracy theories, particularly those which suggest that Mrs. Surratt was innocent. Although this site tells of some ghostly sightings at the Maryland house, including the spirit of Mrs. Surratt, it also mentions medium Sybil Leek, visiting the tavern with Hans Holzer. She supposedly connected with "Edwin Booth," described as one of the tavern's owners. According to researchers at the Mary Surratt Museum, this is incorrect—there is absolutely no evidence that Edwin, John Wilkes Booth's

brother ever owned the Surratt tavern. Revisionist history via medium is not always reliable.

Some ghosts seem to have statutes of limitation, where they wear out / stop appearing after a few years. The report of the ghost of Mrs. Surratt above dates from the year after her death. Have there been any recent Surratt sightings at either house? [chriswoodyard8 AT gmail.com](mailto:chriswoodyard8@gmail.com).

Posted by

Chris Woodyard

on April 14, 2016 in Crime, Death, Ghosts, News, Social History, Spiritualism, Victorian and tagged Abraham Lincoln, assassination of Abraham Lincoln, Dr Theodor Hansmann, John H. Surratt, John Wilkes Booth, Lincoln's assassination, Mary Surratt, Mrs. Surratt's House is Haunted

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New Zealand warns hikers away from Lord of the Rings volcano

Reuters in Wellington
Wednesday 11 May 2016

theguardian.com

Geologists say Mount Ruapehu – backdrop for Mordor – is showing signs of increased volcanic activity



The summit and crater lake of Mount Ruapehu: climbers have been warned to stay out of the summit hazard zone.
Photograph: Murdo Macleod for the Guardian The Lord of the Rings: Fellowship of the Ring. Photograph: Everett/REX Shutterstock

New Zealand has warned hikers and climbers to steer clear of a volcano in a national park whose jagged rock formations and eerie barren landscapes featured in the Lord of the Rings movies.

Quake and volcano monitoring service GNS Science raised the alert for Mount Ruapehu, in the North Island's Tongariro national park, which last erupted in 2007.

"There are more signs of life at the volcano," said volcanologist Brad Scott.

The landscape formed the backdrop for Mordor's hissing wasteland in Peter Jackson's Lord of the Rings trilogy.



The

The Lord of the Rings: Fellowship of the Ring. Photograph: Everett/REX Shutterstock

department of conservation warned trekkers to stay out of the summit hazard zone, within 2km of the centre of Crater Lake.

"Recent visits to the volcano have confirmed an increase in the output of volcanic gas," GNS Science said.

The temperature of the lake has risen from 25C to 46C since mid-April. The volcanic alert level has been lifted to "heightened unrest" from "moderate".

Each year, thousands of people trek the Tongariro Crossing, a 20km (12-mile) alpine crossing that passes all three volcanoes in the area.

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PHOTOS: Chinese Buddhist Monk Is Mummified And Covered In Gold

April 28, 2016

npr.org



Chinatopix via AP hide caption toggle caption Chinatopix via AP A man photographs the mummified body of revered Buddhist monk Fu Hou in March in Quanzhou city in southeastern China's Fujian province.

Chinatopix via AP

i
A man photographs the mummified body of revered Buddhist monk Fu Hou in March in Quanzhou city in southeastern China's Fujian province.

In the southeastern Chinese city of

Quanzhou, a well-known Buddhist monk named Fu Hou has been mummified and encased in gold leaf.

According to The Associated Press, it's "a practice reserved for holy men in some areas with strong Buddhist traditions" and was done to honor Fu Hou's dedication to the religion.

Li Ren, the Chongfu Temple's abbot, said that after the 94-year-old's death in 2012, "the monk's body was washed, treated by two mummification experts, and sealed inside a large pottery jar in a sitting position," according to the wire service.

Video published by The Daily Telegraph showed the "Open Cylinder" ceremony when the monk was removed from the pottery jar in January. The newspaper reported that thousands gathered for the event, and the video showed men cutting off the material wrapped around the monk's body.

The abbot told AP that the body showed "little sign of deterioration apart from the skin having dried out." The wire service reported that "the local Buddhist belief is that only a truly virtuous monk's body would remain intact after being mummified."



Chinatopix via AP hide caption toggle caption Chinatopix via AP Men apply lacquer on the mummified body of revered monk Fu Hou in January. Chinatopix via AP

i

Men apply lacquer on the mummified body of revered monk Fu Hou in January.

The monk's body was then sterilized and painted. The final step – gilding with gold leaf – started on March 16, according to The People's Daily.

Li Ren said the golden statue "is now being placed on the mountain for people to worship," the wire service reported.

The People's Daily has more pictures of the mummification and gilding process.

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Museum Offers \$20,000 For Meteorite Fragment From New England Fireball

huffingtonpost.com

HUFFPOST WEIRD NEWS **Pieces probably landed in Maine this week.**

05/18/2016 01:24 pm ET

- Nina Golgowski Trends reporter, The Huffington Post

A fireball lit up the sky over New England on Tuesday morning, and one museum in Maine is offering \$20,000 to anyone who can produce a significant piece of it.

The Maine Mineral and Gem Museum, which is set to open its doors in 2017, believes the meteor entered the Earth's atmosphere somewhere over the state, based on the hundreds of eyewitness accounts reported to the American Meteor Society. The terminal explosion, which is typically when a fireball fragments, probably occurred about 18 miles west of Rangeley, Maine, according to the museum.

The museum is offering its five-figure reward to the first person who can turn over a piece of the meteorite that weighs at least 1 kilogram, or about 2.2 pounds, but plans to display any recovered fragment in its forthcoming Meteorite Hall.

"This is an exciting opportunity and we need the public's help," Museum Director Barbra Barrett said in a release.

Some meteorite fragments are very small, while others can weigh several dozen tons. Even decent-sized pieces tend to be extremely hard to find for a number of reasons.

Some fragments look like the heavy black rocks most people think of when they think about meteorites, but most resemble "nothing more than mundane terrestrial rocks," according to the AMS. Once on the ground, they usually aren't glowing or even particularly warm.

Meteorites can range from a few grams to several dozen tons in size. These Martian meteorites are seen at auction in New York City.

Anyone considering hunting for meteorites would benefit from a trip to a museum to see other samples, AMS advises.

Another good trick for meteorite-hunters is to attach an extremely strong magnet to a walking stick because the iron and nickel found in most meteorites make the fragments magnetic.

"Meteorites have been known to literally 'jump' out of loose soil in the presence of a strong magnet," AMS states.

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<http://www.mernick.org.uk/thhol/jamrach.html>



Logo

My struggle with a tiger

From "The Boy's Own Paper", Vol. I, no. 3 (February 1st 1879)

MY STRUGGLE WITH A TIGER.

BY CHARLES JAMRACH,

ST. GEORGE'S - IN - THE - EAST.

It is now a good many years ago, when one morning a van-load of wild beasts, which I had bought the previous day from a captain in the London Docks, who brought them from the East Indies, arrived at my repository in Bett Street, St. George's in-the-East. I myself superintended the unloading of the animals, and had given directions to my men to place a den containing a very ferocious full-grown Bengal tiger, with its iron-barred front close against the wall.

They were proceeding to take down a den with leopards, when all of a sudden I heard a crash, and to my horror found the big tiger had pushed out the back part of his den with his hind-quarters, and was walking down the yard into the street, which was then full of people watching the arrival of this curious merchandise. The tiger, in putting his forepaws against the iron bars in front of the den, had exerted his full strength to push with his back against the boards behind, and had thus succeeded in gaining his liberty. As soon as he got into the street, a boy of about nine years of age put out his hand to stroke the beast's back, when the tiger seized him by the shoulder and run down the street with the lad hanging in his jaws. This was done in less time than it takes me to relate ; but when I saw the boy being carried off in this manner, and witnessed the panic that had seized hold of the people, without further thought I dashed after the brute, and got hold of him by the loose skin of the back of his neck. I was then of a more vigorous frame than now, and had plenty of pluck and dash in me.



Wrestling a tiger

I tried thus to stop his further progress, but he was too strong for me, and dragged me, too, along with him. I then succeeded in putting my leg under his hind legs, tripping him up, so to say, and he fell in consequence on his knees. I now, with all my strength and weight, knelt on him, and releasing the loose skin I had hold of, I pushed my thumbs with all my strength behind his ears, trying to strangle him thus. All this time the beast held fast to the boy.

My men had been seized with the same panic as the bystanders, but now I discovered one lurking round a corner, so I shouted to him to come with a crowbar ; he fetched one, and hit the tiger three tremendous blows over the eyes.

It was only now he released the boy. His jaws opened and his tongue protruded about seven

inches. I thought the brute was dead or dying, and let go of him, but no sooner had I done so than he jumped up again. In the same moment I seized the crowbar myself, and gave him, with all the strength I had left, a blow over his head. He seemed to be quite cowed, and, turning tail, went back towards the stables, which fortunately were open. I drove him into the yard, and closed the doors at once. Looking round for my tiger, I found he had sneaked into a large empty den that stood open at the bottom of the yard. Two of my men, who had jumped on to an elephant's box, now descended, and pushed down the iron-barred sliding-door of the den; and so my tiger was safe again under lock and key.

The boy was taken to the hospital, but with the exception of a fright and a scratch, was very little hurt. I lost no time in making inquiry about him, and finding where his father was, I offered him £50 as some compensation for the alarm he had sustained. Nevertheless, the father, a tailor, brought an action against me for damages, and I had to pay £300, of which he had £60, and the lawyers the remaining £240. Of two counsel I employed, only one appeared ; the other, however, stuck to his fee right enough. At the trial the judge sympathised very much with me, saying that, instead of being made to pay, I ought to have been rewarded for saving the life of the boy, and perhaps that of a lot of other people. He, however, had to administer the law as he found it, and I was responsible for any dangerous consequences brought about in my business. He suggested, however, as there was not much hurt done to the boy, to put down the damages as low as possible. The jury named £50, the sum I had originally offered to the boy's father of my own good will. The costs were four times that amount. I was fortunate, however, to find a purchaser for my tiger a few days after the accident ; for Mr. Edmonds, proprietor of Wombwell's Menagerie, having read the report in the papers, came up to town post haste, and paid me £300 for the tiger. He exhibited him as the tiger that swallowed the child, and by all accounts made a small fortune with him.

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The Telegraph

An abandoned tanker ship has perplexed officials after it washed ashore in the coastal city of Robertsport, some 75 kilometres (47 miles) west of Monrovia.



No one has yet been able to explain the presence of the ghost ship, which ran aground last week.

Liberia's Ministry of Defence has dispatched Coast Guard personnel to investigate the presence of the vessel, known only as Tamaya 1.

They are going through the maritime registry to try to determine the owner of the vessel. It is believed to be an oil tanker and flew a Nigerian flag.

According to Defence Minister Brownie Samukai, parts of the ship were burnt, but the cause remains unknown.

Samukai's assistant, David Dahn, said the ship had clearly been in distress but that no passengers were on board when it ran aground.

One of the ship's two lifeboats was still onboard the vessel, meaning the other may have been used by the crew.

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Credit: APTN

Ruh roh, Scooby! Stolen Mystery Machine van crashes into St. Paul house

startribune.com

StarTribune

By Colleen Kelly

May 13, 2016 — 7:19pm



A van painted to look like the Mystery Machine from "Scooby-Doo" crashed into a home in St. Paul after being stolen overnight Friday.

Jinkies! St. Paul police had a mystery on their hands after a stolen van crashed into a house in St. Paul early Friday.

When officers arrived on the scene about 3 a.m., they discovered not just any van, but a rad, "Scooby Doo"-inspired magical Mystery Machine.

The vehicle, which sustained front-end damage, hit a house on the 1000 block of East Fourth Street in the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood.

Sgt. Mike Ernster, a St. Paul police spokesman, said officers were able to track

down the owner of the vehicle, who lived in the Payne-Phalen neighborhood and had last seen the van parked outside his house Thursday night.

After a search, two teens were found nearby, and officers continue to investigate the mystery.

Meanwhile, St. Paul police had more fun with the incident than a Saturday morning cartoon, posting this update to Twitter:

Zoinks! They would have gotten away with it, too, if it wasn't for that meddling house in the way. Suspects located. [pic.twitter.com/UhSA5FDpaJ](https://twitter.com/UhSA5FDpaJ)

— St. Paul Police PIO (@sppdPIO) May 13, 2016

ckelly@startribune.com 612-673-7400 onecolleen

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Mystery severed foot which sparked police probe turned out to be TEACHING AID

express.co.uk


EXPRESS

Home of the Daily and Sunday Express
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Mystery severed foot which sparked police probe turned out to be TEACHING AID

A SEVERED foot found in a park which puzzled police for months was probably just a teaching aid, an investigation has concluded.

PUBLISHED: 11:12, Wed, May 18, 2016 | UPDATED: 11:52, Wed, May 18, 2016



SWNS



Severed foot was found in Weston Park East

The mystery appendage was discovered in a bramble bush earlier this year and has left pathologists baffled due to its lack of DNA.

But now it turns out the foot was probably an anatomical specimen used in teaching.

Police are now satisfied no crime has been committed - but are still investigating exactly how it got there.



• Wild pig roams streets of Yorkshire for months - but NO ONE knows w...



• Sinkhole spews HOT VAPOUR into the air after opening in city centre

The public really want answers and I want answers

Detective Inspector Paul Catton

Horrified dog-walkers made the grisly find in Weston Park East in Bath, Somerset, on February 19 this year, prompting a police investigation.

While tests proved the foot was human, forensic exams yielded very little DNA and a Home Office pathologist speculated the genetic material appeared to have been "killed by something".

Avon and Somerset Police have spent three months consulting a number of scientific experts.

Now Dr Heather Bonney, a forensic anthropologist at the Natural History Museum in London, said she believed the foot had probably been "fixed" or preserved with chemicals, which could explain the lack of DNA.



SWNS

Police are satisfied no crime has been committed

Dr Bonney added that the foot's appearance was unusual as it did not look like it had recently been severed from a body.

She said there was no evidence of any injury or disease and the item was "entirely consistent with being either a medical, anatomical or museum specimen".

The state of the bones suggested the foot came from an adult, but there was no way of knowing the sex, age or ancestry.

Dr John Troyer, who runs the Centre for Death and Society at Bath University, suggested the foot may have come from a private collection and the owner may not have known how to dispose of it properly.

Detective Inspector Paul Catton from Avon and Somerset Police said the foot was no longer thought to be linked to any recent missing persons cases.

However, he still wants to hear from any "training establishments" in the Bath area which may have stored anatomical specimens in the past.



SWNS

Police are still investigating how the foot got there

He said: "We have carried out an extensive investigation into the foot and we have exhausted all active lines of enquiry pending any new information.

"We are satisfied that no crime has been committed and that the foot is more than likely an exhibit from a medical or educational establishment."

Dr Bonney said the foot's appearance did not look like it had recently been severed

Det Insp Catton added: "The public really want answers and I want answers.

"I want to hear from any colleges or buildings that were previously schools and may have



SWNS

owned items like this.

"I'll be asking them if they've cleared out any cellars recently, that kind of thing."

1 Comment

Antieu

Det Insp Catton added: "The public really want answers and I want answers." Absolute BS. Stop wasting taxpayers' money!

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Mystery surrounds bizarre SEA MONSTER that has washed up on a beach in Wales

07:10, 16 May 2016

thesun.co.uk

A MYSTERY sea monster washed up on a British seashore has left beachgoers baffled about the huge beast.

The large creature's 11ft long carcass was discovered by a couple walking their dog in Port Talbot, South Wales - but no one has been able to identify what it once was.

Melanie Rees, 41, said she and husband Mike, 47, were used to seeing jellyfish and other small creatures washed up on the sands at Morfa Beach - but never anything this big.



Melanie Rees, (pictured) and husband Mike made the gruesome discovery while walking their dog

Melanie Rees, (pictured) and husband Mike made the gruesome discovery while walking their dog Wales News Service

The unusual sea monster was found at Morfa Beach in Port Talbot, South Wales Wales News Service

Mum-of-two Melanie said she's never seen anything like it Wales News Service

She uploading photos of the beast onto social media but no one has been able to identify it yet Wales News Service

Mum-of-two Melanie said: "I couldn't believe how big it was. At first I thought it was a piece of driftwood or a big log as it was so far off the beach.



The unusual sea monster was found at Morfa Beach in Port Talbot, South Wales

"But when we got closer, I could see thousands of flies and I knew it had been an animal.

"I think it could be a whale, but I'm not sure. I don't think a whale would wash up that far."

Melanie said despite uploading photos of the beast onto social media no one has been able to help identify her find.

She added: "People on Facebook have been hilarious. One has even said it could be a dinosaur, but I'm not so sure."

Another sea monster was found washed up on a tourist beach in Mexico earlier this week, leaving experts baffled.

The 13-foot-long beast was found by beach-goers on Bonfil Beach - but so far nobody has been able to identify it.

Stunned spectators gathered around and took photos, which they shared on social media, sparking speculation over what the animal could be.



Mum-of-two Melanie said she's never seen anything like it

The 13-foot-long beast was spotted on a tourist beach in Mexico CEN

The animal is not thought to have been dead for very long - although once it washed up on the shore it started decaying rapidly.

The coordinator of the Civil Guard and Fire Brigade, Rosa Camacho, said: "We have no idea what type of animal this is, but I do know that it does not smell bad or have a fetid aroma."

"It is four metres long and was found on Bonfil Beach."



She uploading photos of the beast onto social media but no one has been able to identify it yet

Photos of the strange creature have been shared online thousands of times and have provoked a debate about what kind of animal it is.

Some have suggested that the creature might be a type of giant squid and others a whale.

Photos of the strange creature have been shared online thousands of times

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The 13-foot-long beast was spotted on a tourist beach in Mexico

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Wales News Service

Naivasha 'vampire' has a new confession - Nairobi News

nation.co.ke

**Naivasha 'vampire' has a new confession**

Posted on Apr 2, 2016



Geoffrey Njoroge Matheri during a past appearance at Nakuru Law Courts for the hearing of murder cases he allegedly committed in Naivasha on diverse dates in 2008. PHOTO | SULEIMAN MBATIAH

A man linked to a series of macabre murders in Naivasha town six years ago now says he was framed by police officers who coerced him to admit to murder charges.

Suspected serial killer Geoffrey Matheri alias 'Fongo' on Friday told a Nakuru High court that he was fixed after police officers at the

Naivasha Police Station threatened him with death if he failed to confess to being behind the spate of killings.

"I was forced by police to confess that I was a serial killer. They issued me with death threats and told me to admit that I killed women and sucked their blood," he submitted before Justice Maureen Odero.

He made the claims when he was put on defence by the court after the state had demonstrated an arguable case against him.

The murder suspect who was clad in a black suit and who appeared composed further denied that the house where police exhumed corpses was his home.

Instead, he said he was a street boy who eked a living from supplying water to local hotels in Naivasha town and that he never owned a house.

"The house where corpses were recovered was not mine. I was only escorted to the crime scene by police," he told the court.

SOLD BODY PARTS

He also said that he and Bishop Jeremiah Parangyo of the New Hope for All Nations Church, whom he had earlier linked to the murders were innocent.

After his arrest in 2008, Matheri had claimed Bishop Parangyo had instructed him to kill and

sell to him body parts.

State witnesses have linked Mr Matheri to a series of murders including that of Ms Naomi Wairimu, crimes he allegedly committed on diverse dates between January 1 and August 14, 2008 at his Kihoto house on the outskirts of Naivasha town.

Before he was arrested and charged with the murder of Ms Wairimu, the suspected serial killer shocked the country when he confessed before detectives of abducting women, raping and sucking their blood.

He earned the nickname 'Naivasha vampire' after some of his victims who were rescued revealed that he had been sucking blood from them.

In November 2014, Mr Matheri was found guilty of kidnap by a Naivasha magistrate and was jailed for four years, a jail term he is currently serving at the Naivasha Maximum Prisons.

The murder case he is facing commenced on July last year, after dragging on since he pleaded not guilty to the charges more than five years ago.

Witnesses who have testified in court portrayed Mr Matheri as a hardcore serial killer who kidnapped even school girls, murdered them before sucking their blood. Hearing continues in May 6.

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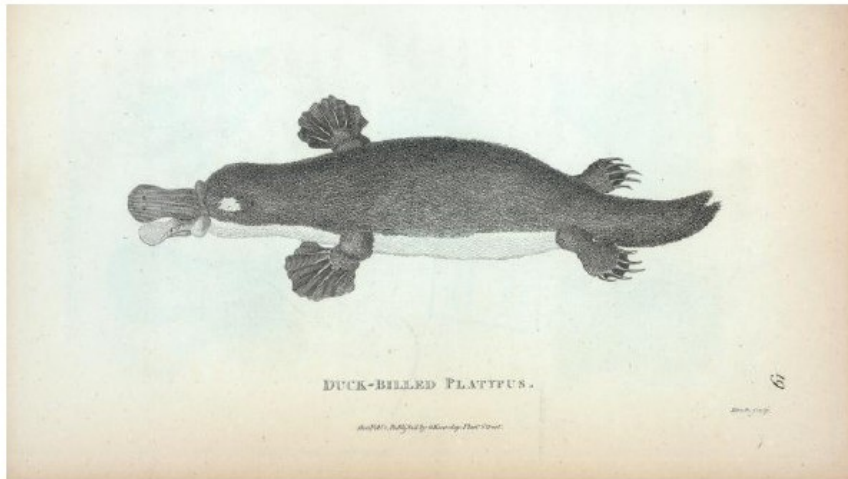
Why 19th-Century Naturalists Didn't Believe in the Platypus

atlasobscura.com

Scientists argued for 90 years about the animal's freaky looks.

by Natalie Zarrelli

April 21, 2016



In his laboratory study in 1799, biologist George Shaw stared down at his new specimen in disbelief. The creature from the colony of New South Wales came preserved in pungent alcohol, and he carefully snipped the thick, brown pelt around the creature's beak, sure he would soon reveal the stitches where an expert taxidermist had fused the bird and beast together. It was like nothing he had seen before: the creature had the body of a furry brown cat, four

short legs and sharp claws over webbed feet; the tail of a beaver, but the beak of a duck.

Shaw had met his first platypus, and did not for a moment believe it was possibly real. Still, he couldn't find any evidence that it was a fake, either. That year in his book *The Naturalist's Miscellany*, he described it as having the "perfect resemblance of the beak of a duck...grafted on the head of a quadruped." Such an animal "naturally excites the idea of some deceptive preparation by artificial means," he confessed.

The scientific world was moving through a new, exciting age of discovery and debate. Biologists in Europe were close to developing a classification system for animals, and theories on how those animals came to be were brewing. The platypus, with its flexible beak and venomous spurs, was a crowbar in the gear-work of known science, causing debates that would not be resolved for 90 years.



Shaw's suspicions were understandable; the 18th-century scientific community had been burned a few times. Right before entomologist William Charlton died in 1702, he sent in a new species of butterfly, which Carl Linnaeus would later include in his influential *Systema Naturae*. The scientific community accepted Charlton's discovery until 1793, when another entomologist discovered ink marks carefully placed on its wings.

In 1725 Dr. Johann Beringer was tricked by local boys into collecting over 2,000 false fossils and publishing them in a book before he realized he was subject to a hoax. What's more, fishermen had been buying expertly sewn monkey-and-fish taxidermy creations from East Asian artists for years, one of which became P.T. Barnum's famed Feejee Mermaid just a few decades later.

Even two decades later scientists weren't convinced that the creature was legit; anatomist Robert Knox announced that the platypus was a "freak imposture", and that "the scientific [community] felt inclined to class this rare production of nature with eastern mermaids and other works of art." The veracity of this "amphibious creature of the mole kind," as New South Wales colonist David Collins described the animal in 1797, would be in doubt for many more



decades.

The animals kept sailing in from the colonies, but even after biologists agreed the platypus was real, no one knew what to think of it. What was it, exactly? A creepy, furry reptile? A mammal-bird? And what allows such a creature to exist in the first place?



According to Ann Moyal's book *Platypus*, theories about the platypus developed even before specimens were shipped from Australia to Europe. Soon after setting sight on the animal in 1793, Australian Governor John Hunter declared that "a promiscuous intercourse between the different sexes of all these different animals" might be how the platypus had come to be. Charles Darwin's grandfather Dr. Erasmus

Darwin used this quote to bolster his budding statement of evolution in his 1796 book, *Zoomania*.

Australia began sending platypus organs preserved in alcohol to Europe in alarming numbers. An article in *International Science and National Scientific Identity* writes that, "Literally thousands of preserved and stuffed platypus and their uteri were shipped back to Britain for research. It's a miracle they still survive today after such slaughter."

Anatomists of the time needed to know how to classify this animal, and of course this provoked arguments too. While looking at his plentiful platypus organs, British anatomist Everard Home of the Royal College of Surgeons in London found that the beak was actually a sensory apparatus, and that the platypus's sexual organs were like those of an oviparous reptile. Home believed the platypus had to be a new kind of mammal more closely related to birds, while others insisted it was a mammal. Anatomist J. K. W. Illiger deftly placed it in a new class called *Reptantia*. Jean Baptiste-Lamarck insisted it was a new non-mammal, and called its class *Prototheria*.



Lamarck had already introduced the idea of transmutationism, a controversial early theory of evolution that said new creatures formed through adaptation, and ideas about how the platypus fit into this bounced aggressively off university walls. Anti-transmutationists of the mid-1800s felt these ideas were too simplistic for the platypus. Biologist and anti-transmutationist Richard Owen believed platypuses were mammals that gave birth through eggs which developed viviparously, and particularly disliked that transmutationist Etienne Geoffrey Saint-Hilaire put the platypus into a new, transitional class called *Monotremata*.

Charles Darwin was also intrigued at the platypus's existence, and seeing it in a 1836 excursion to Australia may have inspired him to connect his own thoughts on evolution. *Smithsonian* reports that Darwin's descendant, Chris Darwin, was told from a young age about the "platypus moment," a factor that made the influential scientist "question creationism for the first time" while in Australia.

More than three decades after it was first described, biologists were still unsure if the platypus laid eggs or gave birth and nursed, which would dictate its classification. Even more

complicated was that the female platypus has no teats to nurse her young—it wouldn't be until 1833 that biologist George Bennett went to Australia and discovered that the animals do indeed nurse—the female platypus actually secretes milk from its pores, which pool into ridges on the platypus abdomen like little milk dishes for her young.



In the late 1800s, Scottish zoologist William Hay Caldwell finally managed to dissect fresh platypus eggs and confirmed once and for all that the animal did in fact lay them, though the embryos partially developed inside the platypus's body, which also nursed its young. The platypus was classified as a mammal—one of five that are known to lay eggs, in the order *Monotremata*.

The platypus is no longer a source for constant debate, but the weird little creature still has a lot to teach. In fact, revisiting platypus genetics is helping biologists learn about the evolution of Ribonucleic acid (RNA), and how mammals began to pass XY chromosomes—the platypus, like birds, have multiple X's and Y's versus the mammalian single pair. In 2010, the 80 toxins of the platypus' venomous spurs were discovered to have come from separate animal lineages. And in 2013, a giant ancient platypus tooth was found, which might rearrange some of what was thought about the platypus' evolution before.

While some members of the public might like to see it, the original platypus specimen given to Shaw is now too delicate to be exhibited. Shaw's original, skeptical cut marks are still visible on its pelt, though, which spends its afterlife in a box in the "Mammal Tower" of London's Natural History Museum.

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A mysterious new species could be the earliest humans

bbc.com



A new species of recently discovered human has not yet been dated, but some believe it could be one of the earliest humans in our genus

2 March 2016

In 2013, an astounding new discovery shook up the field of early human evolution.

The bones of a new species of extinct hominin called *Homo naledi* were discovered in the Rising Star Cave in South Africa and unveiled to the world in September 2015.

The new species had a primitive braincase but fairly modern hands and feet, which is a strange mixture.

To find out more, BBC Earth spoke to Professor Chris Stringer at London's Natural History Museum, where the reconstructed hand and jaw of *H. naledi* was on display as part of a new exhibition on human evolution.

The new species has not yet been dated, and is not expected to be until at least the end of 2016. But researchers believe it could sit right at the base of the line *Homo*, that led to us.

If it does, it was one of the earliest humans ever to walk the Earth, as Stringer explains in the video above.

Video produced by Pierangelo Pirak and Melissa Hogenboom.

Human evolution is a permanent exhibition at the Natural History Museum in London, UK.

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Nicholas Winton: Memorial service for Holocaust hero - BBC News

bbc.com

**Nicholas Winton: Memorial service for Holocaust hero**

• 7 hours ago



Sir Nicholas Winton organised the "Kindertransport" of children from Czechoslovakia

Image copyrightAP

A memorial service will be held later for Sir Nicholas Winton, who rescued hundreds of children from the Holocaust in the months before World War Two.

The service at London's Guildhall will be attended by 400 people, including 28 of those he saved, and Czech, Slovak and UK government representatives.

Sir Nicholas organised the "Kindertransport" in which 669 mostly Jewish children came to

Britain by train from Czechoslovakia in 1939.

He died on 1 July last year aged 106.

The Kindertransport became public knowledge on BBC TV show *That's Life* in 1988 when presenter Esther Rantzen reunited some of those saved with the person who helped them escape the Nazis.

Many of the children went on to have their own families and the number currently alive as a result of the Kindertransport is believed to be about 7,000.

Saved children and their families, making a total of about 130, have travelled from around the world to go to the service.

Those attending include Lord Alfred Dubs, Lady Milena Grenfell-Baines and the Rev John Fieldsend, who were all part of the Kindertransport, and representatives from the German and Swedish embassies.

The service will have contributions from Lord Dubs, Dame Esther Rantzen, four other of the children, and former Czech ambassador Michael Zantovsky.

A spokesman for the service said: "The memorial service provides an opportunity for the many hundreds of people around the world who owe their lives to Sir Nicholas, or who have been inspired by him, to celebrate his achievements and to pay their respects to a British citizen who helped to make the world a better place."

A memorial concert will take place on Friday at St John's Smith Square in central London, including readings by actors Jason Isaacs and Rupert Graves and music from cellist Alexander Baillie, raising funds for current child refugees.

The Briton who saved children from the Holocaust

Image caption

- Sir Nicholas was born Nicholas Wertheimer in 1909 to Jewish parents
- By 1938 he was a young stockbroker in London
- He dropped everything to go to Prague to help Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi occupation
- Sir Nicholas organised foster families for Jewish children in Britain, placing adverts in newspapers
- The 669 children travelled on eight trains across four countries
- Sir Nicholas's team persuaded British custom officials to allow all the children in despite incomplete documentation

How did one Englishman save 669 children from the Holocaust?

One of the Kindertransport children, Hana Usaac-Kleiner, now 88, told the BBC that Nicholas Winton saved their lives.

She said: "He was one of the few on the team in Prague who were well-enough informed about what was happening in Germany and Austria to realise that the danger to Jewish people was imminent."

Another, Kurt Taussig, 92, said he had known nothing about Nicholas Winton until the Esther Rantzen show.

"From that moment on, he became the nearest thing to God himself by what he had done," he said. "We realised that he had done something quite miraculous. Nobody will ever do it again."

"He himself was shy and polite and didn't want any fuss, didn't want any bother. In fact he was pleading to be left alone and that's why he never spoke about his doings all these years. It was only by accident it was discovered."

Sir Nicholas continued community work in later life in Maidenhead, Berkshire.

His surviving children Nick and Barbara Winton speak at events around the world about how one person can change lives.

Barbara Winton wrote his biography *If It's Not Impossible*, the title of which is taken from his motto: "If something is not impossible there must be a way of doing it."

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Image copyright Winton Family/PA

Atheist Ad Mocking Noah's Ark Park Rejected by Billboard Companies

2016-05-11

go.com

<http://abcnews.go.com/US/atheist-ad-mocking-noahs-ark-park-genocide-incest/story?id=39034409>

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Atheist Ad Mocking Noah's Ark Park as 'Genocide and Incest' Center Rejected by Billboard Companies

• By MICHAEL EDISON HAYDEN

May 11, 2016, 3:30 PM ET



Two
billboard

ArkEncounter/Youtube

companies have refused to run an advertisement ridiculing the Ark Encounter, a Noah's Ark-themed amusement park being built in Williamstown, Kentucky, according to the group that whose ad was rejected.

The atheist group Tri-State Freethinkers, which commissioned the advertisement, says it has been turned down by billboard companies Lamar and Event Advertising and Promotions LLC, despite \$10,000 having been raised to fund the project. The proposed billboard would have critiqued the park by branding it, "Genocide and Incest Park: Celebrating 2,000 years of myths."

"We tried with everyone we could think of, and these were [billboard] companies that originally were in agreement to do business with us," Jim Helton, the president of Tri-State Freethinkers, told ABC News today, speculating that fear of a scandal pushed the companies to drop the ads. "We're just looking for someone to take our money."

Tri-State Freethinkers has been in existence for three years, according to Helton, and now has 1,500 members.

Ark Encounter is the brainchild of a group called Answers in Genesis, which also runs an establishment in Petersburg, Kentucky, called the Creation Museum, an institution that promises to "bring the pages of the bible to life," according to its website.

Dinosaur bones, as well as dinosaur statues, are featured prominently in the material for the Creation Museum, and a webpage on the Answers in Genesis site is devoted to refuting the evolutionary theory about dinosaurs from the perspective of a biblical interpretation and instead saying that dinosaurs and



Dylan Loran/AP Photo



ArkEncounter/Youtube

people lived together. Ark Encounter, its follow-up project, boasts having received over \$31 million in donations to fund the "life-sized" replica Ark.

Answers in Genesis President Ken Ham, who has been criticized for his perceived anti-science beliefs and alleged prejudicial hiring practices, paid for a billboard of his own in 2014 to defend the construction of Ark Encounter.

"To all of our intolerant liberal friends, thank God you can't sink this ship," the billboard read.

Helton said he has not given up trying to find someone to display the ads, and said he hopes that the media attention surrounding this controversy helps him to find someone who will take his business.

"The beliefs propagated by Ham and his group are fundamentally anti-science. They're teaching children that science and evolution aren't true," Helton said of why his group wants to publish the ads. "They are teaching kids that dinosaurs were vegetarian until original sin."

The Ark Encounter did not immediately respond to ABC News' requests for comment, but Ham took to Twitter today to attack Helton and his group.

"The secularists aren't out for free exercise of religion but to impose their anti-God religion on the culture," he wrote.

The @TSFJim secularists aren't out for free exercise of religion but to impose their anti-God religion on the culture.

— Ken Ham (@aigkenham) May 11, 2016

The billboard companies, Lamar and Event Advertising and Promotions LLC, did not immediately respond to ABC News' requests for comment.

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Man dumps non-toxic green dye into Alaska creek as a prank

April 22, 2016

yahoo.com

KETCHIKAN, Alaska (AP) — Authorities say the green water flowing in the Ketchikan Creek that caused some panic and drew a response from multiple agencies was the result of a prank.

Officials have determined that the dye dumped into the water on Wednesday is non-toxic. Ketchikan police talked to the man responsible for the dye, but he was not arrested or cited.

"It was just a prank," Officer Charles Johnson told The Ketchikan Daily News (<http://bit.ly/1YJO7KZ>). "He happened to come across some sort of plumbing dye that they use for testing — checking for leaks and stuff — and thought it'd be funny to throw it in the creek and make people wonder why the creek was green."

The Ketchikan Fire Department had also responded to the creek after reports of the green water around 4 p.m. While the incident may have initially been a concern for fire crews, police and residents who first discovered the green creek, Johnson said he did not see the activity as criminal.

"They already confirmed that the substance was non-toxic. ... I think the biggest problem was the slight panic of everybody trying to respond to a possible environmental disaster when there wasn't one," Johnson said.

Information from: Ketchikan (Alaska) Daily News, <http://www.ketchikandailynews.com>

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North Korea stepping up security after 'first' bank robbery

upi.com



By Elizabeth Shim | April 29, 2016 at 10:53 PM



Tourists sightsee in a speed boat past new building projects in the North Korean city Sinuiju, across the Yalu River from Dandong, China's largest border city with North Korea. Authorities are investigating into North Korea's first bank robbery, sources in the country say. Photo by Stephen Shaver/UPI | License Photo

SEOUL, April 29 (UPI) -- North Korea is investigating its "first" bank robbery after a break-in at

a branch of the country's central bank.

A source in North Hamgyong Province who spoke to Radio Free Asia on the condition of anonymity said the robbery occurred April 4, in the Shinam district of Chongjin, a city near the China border.

"Because this is the first time the bank has been robbed since the founding of the country, many people are fixated on the incident," the source said, according to Yonhap.

The source said the bank is located near the Dorip Theater and the Shinam branch typically retains night guards on duty.

But at the time of the incident the guards were reportedly not at their stations.

The bank robbers smashed the entrance and made away with the cash, the source said.

They took off with a total of 70 million North Korean won, a currency for which there is no official exchange rate.

Authorities are investigating into whether the robbers had an accomplice on the inside, which is a likely possibility, the source said.

The incident has led to increased surveillance at other bank branches, another source told RFA.

The source also said branches were carrying more cash in preparation for the state's Seventh Party Congress on May 6.

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'Oldest message in a bottle' breaks world record

itv.com

Main page content

1. ITV Report
2. 19 April 2016 at 1:42pm



PA Wire

Undated handout photo issued by the Marine Biological Association. Credit: PA Wire

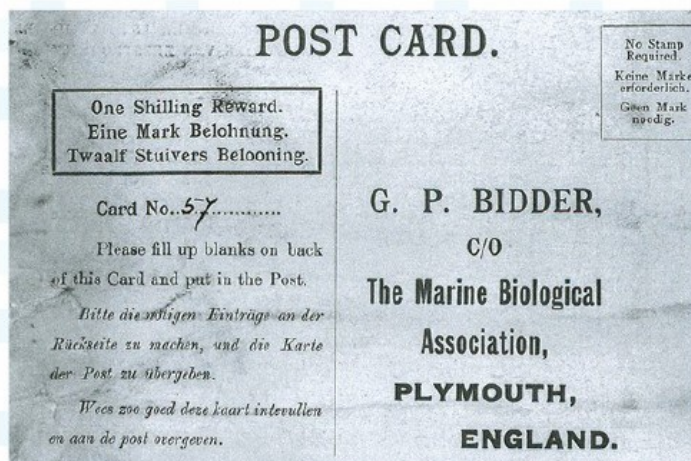
A message in a bottle which washed up more than 108 years after it was thrown into the sea has been confirmed as the world's oldest.

Inside was a postcard asking that it be sent to the Marine Biological Association of the

UK - and promising the sender a shilling if they returned the bottle.

The association in Plymouth said the bottle was one of some 1,000 released as part of research carried out by marine expert George Parker Bidder.

After 108 years, four months and 18 days, retired postal worker Marianne Winkler found the bottle in April last year during her holiday on Amrum - about 310 miles from the UK.



Postcard found inside bottle

The postcard found inside the bottle appears in good condition Credit: Marine Biological Association/PA

She sent it back to the UK and received an old English shilling (5p) in return.

Guinness World Records has confirmed the message in a bottle as the world's oldest.

The postcard asked the finder to fill out information about where the bottle was found, if it was trawled up, what the boat's name was, and asked once the postcard was completed for it to be returned to a George Parker Bidder in Plymouth for a reward of one shilling.

Mr Bidder was a president at the Marine Biological Association from 1939 to 1945, so our receptionist was somewhat confused.

– Guy Baker, from the Marine Biological Association

According to Baker, George Parker Bidder released 1,200 bottles between 1904-1906, but estimated that 55% were trawled up by fishermen each year.

He said "some bottles were never returned, assumed to be lost in the open ocean forever. The bottle discovered in Germany was from a set released on November 30 1906."

The previous record for a message in a bottle was 99 years and 43 days . It was found west of the Shetland Islands in July 2013.

Last updated Tue 19 Apr 2016

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'Oldest axe' was made by early Australians - BBC News

bbc.com



By Jonathan Webb Science reporter, BBC News



B Image copyright Australian Archaeology

A tiny stone flake from north-western Australia is a remnant of the earliest known axe with a handle, archaeologists have claimed.

The fingernail-sized sliver of basalt is ground smooth at one end and appears to date from 44 to 49,000 years ago.

The evidence is a small piece of basalt just 11mm long

This is not long after humans first settled Australia - and several thousand years earlier than previous, similar ground-stone discoveries.

The findings appear in the journal Australian Archaeology.

Although much older "hand axes", usually made of flint, have been found across Europe and Africa - one well-known example found on a Norfolk beach is thought to be 700,000 years old - those were very different tools.

Axe blades made from harder stone, painstakingly battered into blades, are known from sites in several discrete locations around the globe including northern Asia, the Americas - and Australia.

Image copyright Australian

Archaeology
Image caption

Archaeologists have deduced that they were usually attached to a handle to form a tool much like a hatchet. Such implements are often associated with the development of agriculture but ancient examples from Australia vastly pre-date agriculture anywhere in the world - and this latest fragment is even a good 10,000 years older than similar finds in the far north of the continent.

It suggests an adaptation to a new environment by the very first Australians, according to the research team who discovered it.

"We know that they didn't have axes where they came from," said Prof Sue O'Connor from the Australian National University.

"There's no axes in the islands to our north. They arrived in Australia and innovated axes."



The surface at the top of the fragment is ground smooth

Prof O'Connor first dug the fragment up in the 1990s, along with many other objects and samples, from a rock shelter called Carpenter's Gap in the Kimberley region of Western Australia.

It was only when she and her colleagues were studying that haul in more detail in 2014 that they discovered the tiny piece of polished stone.

Closer analysis suggested it

could be a chip hewn off the blade of a stone axe as it was re-sharpened.

"Nowhere else in the world do you get axes at this date," Prof O'Connor said.

"Australian stone artefacts have often been characterised as simple. But clearly that's not the case when you have these hafted axes earlier in Australia than elsewhere in the world."



The fragment was dug up in the 1990s in Windjana Gorge National Park, Western Australia

Image copyright Thinkstock
Image caption

Evidence like this tell-tale basalt chip is difficult to come by. A ground-stone axe would take an investment of hours or days to manufacture and would then probably be used for years - so there are not many of them to be found.

But they are also not very widespread, according to co-author Prof Peter Hiscock

from the University of Sydney.

"Although humans spread across Australia, axe technology did not spread with them," he said. "Axes were only made in the tropical north, perhaps suggesting two different colonising groups or that the technology was abandoned as people spread into desert and sub-tropical woodlands."

That north-south discrepancy persists in the archaeological record, Prof Hiscock added, until axes become more common across Australia within the last few thousand years.

Image caption

Prof John Shea is a stone tool expert at Stony Brook University in the US. Commenting on the new ground-stone finding, he said its very singular nature makes it difficult to draw confident conclusions.

"The evidence is essentially one flake - one piece of stone out of hundreds and hundreds that they've excavated from this rock shelter site," he told the BBC. "They would make a stronger case if they could show that similar chips with edge abrasion occurred at a greater number of sites."

Further finds, Prof Shea explained, could link this very ancient discovery to times and locations where ground axes are more common.

Without that link, he said there is "still reason for doubt" that the little fragment is, indeed, from an axe blade.

"It could've been smoothed off for some other reason. It might have been the edge of a tool, abraded to make it smooth so that it doesn't cut into the handle that it's lashed to, or it doesn't cut the hand of the person using it.

"But it's a cool find. Again and again, the archaeological record suggests these people were far more clever than past archaeologists were willing to give them credit for. The aboriginal Australian ancestors had a lot more complex technology than we think they did."

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Image copyright Stuart Hay/Australian National University

'Original' Romeo and Juliet props found at Curtain Theatre site | News | The Stage

thestage.co.uk



Archaeologists uncover remains of London's historic Curtain Theatre

by Georgia Snow - May 18, 2016

Archaeologists excavating the playhouse where *Romeo and Juliet* was first staged have found artefacts that could have been used during the iconic play's original production.

The Curtain Theatre in east London is being excavated as part of a project that will put the playhouse at the centre of a £750 million mixed-use development, comprising a 37-storey residential tower,

shops and restaurants, as well as a cultural heritage centre and performance space.

The dig, which began last month, has unearthed items including a ceramic bird whistle. The artefact dates back to the 16th century – when the theatre was in use – and could have been used to provide sound effects during performances.

Archaeologists have also discovered that the playhouse was rectangular – not polygonal, as was the style for many of its contemporary venues.

Project manager David Divers, from the Museum of London Archaeology, described the dig's initial findings as a "great discovery".

He told *The Stage*: "Probably the most interesting thing is the bird caller. Plays like *Romeo and Juliet* have several references to birdsong so it could well have been used as a theatrical prop to create special effects."

Other findings include a bone comb, which could have been used by actors backstage, and a token, which Divers said was often used to buy beer.

He added: "This is important because the Curtain is not very well represented in historic records, so there is a lot more potential to find things out from the archaeology. There are a lot more records for other theatres, so this has the potential to tell us some interesting stuff, which it is proving to do."

The archaeological dig will continue for another month, with workers expecting to discover more about the theatre, which is also reported to have staged the first production of *Henry V*.

The development, called *The Stage*, is expected to be completed in early 2019.

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From The Straits Times Archives: Past 'mass hysteria' cases in Singapore

Published Apr 19, 2016, 2:30 pm SGT

straitstimes.com

Lee Min Kok
mkleesph.com.sg

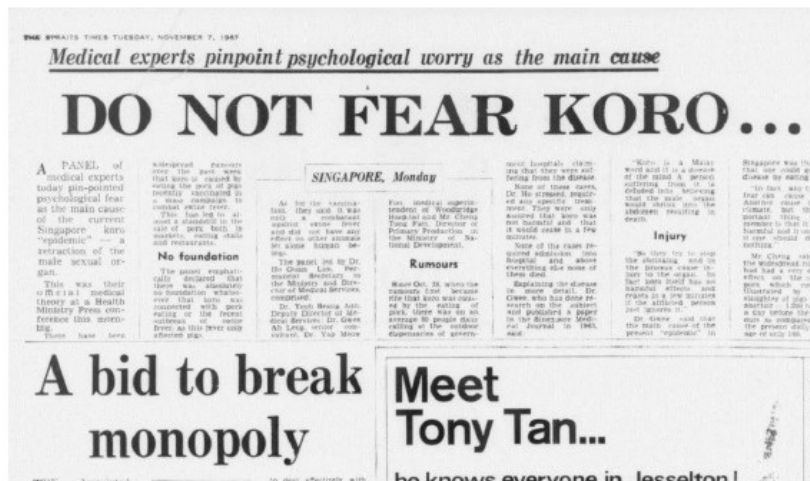
SINGAPORE - Several schools in the Malaysian state of Kelantan have been plagued by incidents of mass hysteria over the past week, with students claiming to have seen ghostly figures.

To date, eight ustaz, a bomoh and Islamic traditional experts have been sought for their expertise in chasing away the "spirits", as the problem grew so serious that one school was forced to shut down temporarily.

The phenomenon of mass hysteria, while not new, has been rarely seen in recent times, although outbreaks were especially prevalent in schools and factories in Malaysia and Singapore throughout the 1970s.

Here's a look at some of the reported cases in Singapore.

Koro "epidemic", October 1967



"Do not fear Koro", read the headline of the ST article on Nov 7, 1967. PHOTO: ST FILE

One of the earliest reported cases of mass hysteria was medical in nature. Rumours had first spread on Oct 28, 1967, that eating pork caused koro - a retraction of the male sexual organ.

Panic ensued as an average of 80 people called daily at the outdoor dispensaries of government

hospitals claiming to be suffering from the disease, said a Straits Times report on Nov 7.

A Health Ministry press conference was subsequently called to dispel the rumours and clarify that koro was not connected to consuming pork. A panel of medical experts pinpointing psychological fear as the main cause of the epidemic.

The epidemic was apparently so severe it "led to almost a standstill in the sale of pork both in markets, eating stalls and restaurants", the report said.

General Electric (USA) Television and Appliance, January 1973

On Jan 13, 1973, a case occurred at the company's flatted factory in Boon Keng Road when eight female employees became hysterical. There is no report of a second incident, but on Jan 17, a third incident was said to have happened with as many as 25 women on the factory's U-Board assembly line affected.

Part of the factory was subsequently shut down that afternoon.

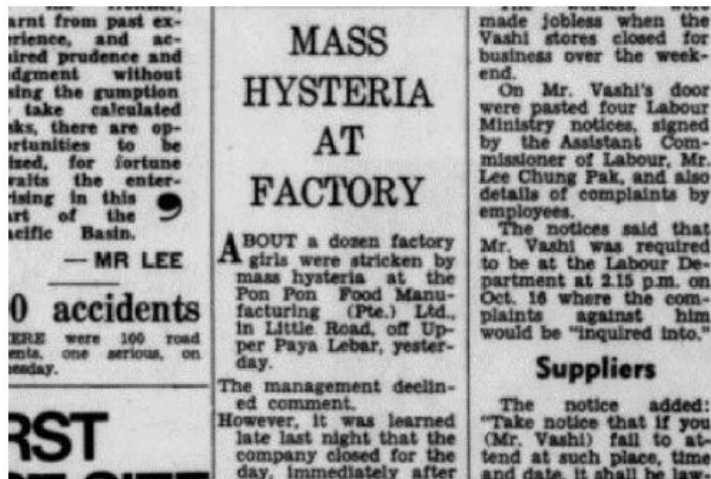
One woman said in a Straits Times report: "It was frightening. The women went into a trance and started screaming."

Another said they had not taken the first incident seriously. "But it certainly gave cause for concern when another 12 became hysterical on Tuesday (Jan 16) and about 25 today (Jan 17)," she added.

Employees also claimed they saw visions of a teenage girl lurking in the washroom for several nights.

Bomohs and Buddhist monks held daily seances during the outbreak as incense was burnt and holy water sprinkled at two blocks of the factory.

Pon Pon Food Manufacturing, October 1973



MASS HYSTERIA AT FACTORY

ABOUT a dozen factory girls were stricken by mass hysteria at the Pon Pon Food Manufacturing (Pte.) Ltd. in Little Road, off Upper Paya Lebar, yesterday.

The management declined comment. However, it was learned late last night that the company closed for the day, immediately after

made jobless when the Vashi stores closed for business over the week-end.

On Mr. Vashi's door were pasted four Labour Ministry notices, signed by the Assistant Commissioner of Labour, Mr. Lee Chung Pak, and also details of complaints by employees.

The notices said that Mr. Vashi was required to be at the Labour Department at 2.15 p.m. on Oct. 16 where the complaints against him would be "inquired into."

Suppliers

The notice added: "Take notice that if you (Mr. Vashi) fail to attend at such place, time and date, it shall be law-

The ST headline on Oct 5, 1973, about a mass hysteria case at Pon Pon Food Manufacturing. PHOTO: ST FILE

About a dozen female workers were stricken by mass hysteria at the food company's factory in Litte Road, off Upper Paya Lebar, on Oct 4, 1973.

Pon Pon, which produced dried cuttlefish and employed 120 workers consisting mainly women, closed for the day immediately after its workers were taken ill at around noon.

Telecommunications Authority of Singapore (TAS), October 1977



TELECOMMUNICATION AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE

TELECOM HEADQUARTERS,
Telephone House,
15/33, Hill Street,
Singapore 6.

Telephone 328071
Telex: RS 21246
Telegraphic Address: Telecom Singapore

PRESS STATEMENT

REF No: GR P2/01/01

DATE: 3 November 1977

MASS HYSTERIA AT ORCHARD OPERATIONS ROOM

The mass hysteria at the Orchard National and Regional Telephone Operations room on 20 October 1977 affected 16 telephonists. The incident began at 4.30 pm when a telephonist suddenly started screaming, affecting 15 other telephonists. They were immediately

A screengrab of the TAS-issued press release about the mass hysteria outbreak at its Exeter Road headquarters. PHOTO: SCREENGAB FROM NAS.GOV.SG

Mass hysteria hit the operations room of the TAS headquarters in Exeter Road on Oct 20, 1977, as a group of women began screaming and struggling with those who tried to calm them.

A report said the incident occurred at around 4.30pm, when most of the day shift staff were about to leave work.

According to a TAS official, some went into a trance while others vomited and frothed in the mouth. They later said a "jin" had entered their bodies.

In a press statement issue on Nov 3, TAS said the hysteria affected 16 telephonists when one of them started screaming. One telephonist was taken to hospital because of a minor injury and discharged later that day.

Woodsville Secondary School, April 1979



Woodsville Secondary School, located at Aljunied Road, in 1977. PHOTO: ST FILE

Up to 30 Secondary 1 and 2 students in the school in Aljunied Road were affected at about noon on April 24, 1979. They were sent to hospital for observation while their classmates were told to leave school early.

It was later revealed in a Straits Times report on July 2, 1980, that 48 students went hysterical during the outbreak.

The report said: "For three days, a frightening 'epidemic' sent one student after another into frenzied trance-like states.

"While some cried, shivered and started eating the grass and empty glasses, others stared into empty space with open eyes while performing a Tai Chi type of dance movement called the Kuda Kepang, an ancient Malay wedding dance.

"Some were restrained from their violent fits by the teachers. No one could communicate with them during their violent fits and trances."

Twenty-eight students gave different accounts of legless apparitions which appeared before them.

General Electric (USA) Television and Appliance, June 1979



The ST headline on June 21, 1979, about a mass hysteria outbreak at the General Electric factory in Boon Keng. PHOTO: ST FILE

Six years after the first wave of incidents, the company's Boon Keng factory again suffered an outbreak on June 20, 1979. At least 20 women were overcome by mass hysteria, with some sent to hospital.

Unnamed electronics firm, June 1979

Factory girls from the firm's Bedok South facility were struck by mass hysteria over two consecutive days.

The firm's doctor reportedly attended to the cases and sent those affected home after treatment.

Labour Ministry arranges meeting to discuss mass hysteria outbreaks, April 1980

The ST headline on April 29, 1980 about a closed-door meeting on mass hysteria. PHOTO: ST FILE

FIRMS PUT MASS HYSTERIA UNDER SCRUTINY

By AHMAD OSMAN

OUTBREAKS of mass hysteria in labour-intensive industries was discussed by senior executives of various companies and the Labour

By JUNE TAN

TWO faculties of the National Singapore are likely to function at the Bukit Timah campus when term starts at the Institute of Education is likely to move to Bukit Timah next year.

The Faculty of Arts/Social Science Faculty are expected to remain at the Bukit Timah where they are now under a Campus scheme.

Sources said that though plans have yet to be finalised, it is almost certain these two faculties will stay put.

The Arts/Social Sciences block at Kent Ridge cannot cater to a combined staff strength of the University of Singapore.

It is unlikely that Paterson occupies any major mass rap in future. And this is expected to be a major

The problem, which had been specially prevalent in labour-intensive industries (mostly electronics and textiles firms), warranted a closed-door discussion between the senior executives of various companies and the ministry on April 26, 1980.

It is believed the meeting emphasised the physical aspects of the problem and how to cope with them, rather than any medical or psychical aspects.

The ministry's industrial health division revealed in July the same year that it had investigated 13

mass hysteria cases, involving a few hundred factory workers, since the first outbreak in 1973. The other cases were not reported.

The Straits Times

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Unbelievable! Popular pastor anoints female members' pants, explains why

naij.com

<https://www.naij.com/805009-unbelievable-popular-pastor-anoints-female-members-pants-explains.html>

April 19th 2016 Retrieved on April 21st 2016 12:56am PST USA

Prophet Mboro might pass as a really good comedian.

The controversial South African pastor whose real name is Paseka Motsoeneng, recently ordered his female members to bring their panties for anointing to protect them against evil spirit.

In an interview on Jacaranda FM yesterday morning, the pastor allegedly claimed that the underwear anointed by him will keep his church members safe from evil spirits.

"Instead of laying my hand, we call that the transference of the anointing. I speak the Word to those underwears. The power of God will get in, they wear it and God does something," he said.

He also warned about the terrors of invisible men known as "spiritual husbands" that stalk ordinary people's houses, sleeping with both men and women.

Nawa for Pastor Mboro oo! Nah only him waka come?

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Pensioner claims to have found hidden Nazi nukes

09/05

thelocal.de

THE LOCAL

*The Local**Pensioner claims to have found hidden Nazi nukes*

The Local · 17 May 2016, 11:54

Published: 17 May 2016 11:54
GMT+02:00**A hobby historian from eastern Germany says he has found Hitler's nuclear bombs in an underground bunker. But did such a bomb even exist?**

Using a ground penetrating radar, 70-year-old Peter Lohr, says he discovered huge caverns in the ground under the Jonastal in Thuringia.

Furthermore, using a 3-D imaging technology he found five large metal objects in the cave, at least two of which he believes are atomic bombs.

The shape of the metal objects corresponds to the shape of a nuclear weapon, said Lohr, who is a trained mechanical engineer.

"The metal's been lying there for 71 years. At some point it will decay and then we will have a second Chernobyl on our hands" he warned tabloid Bild.

The authorities don't seem to be taking his concerns as seriously though.

"They just told me that I'm not allowed to continue my research anymore."

This is of course not the first time that an a hobby researcher has made a fantastical claim about a hidden underground lair full of Nazi secrets.

Just last year, two amateur historians had international media on tenterhooks after claiming they had found a train in a hidden tunnel in Poland full of Nazi gold and other treasures.

After extensive searches of the site, qualified researchers said they could find no evidence the train existed.

Did Nazis develop a nuclear bomb?

That the Nazis did work on their own nuclear weapon is not just a theory believed by conspiratorial crackpots.

In July 2015 public broadcaster ZDF showed a documentary called "The search for Hitler's nuclear weapon".

Among the evidence they cite is a Russian military report given to Stalin which claimed that the Germans had successfully developed a nuclear bomb.

Reputed historian Rainer Karlsch also published a book, "Hitler's Bomb", in 2005 which argued that the Nazis developed an atomic bomb.

Karlsch wrote that two tests on a small nuclear bomb had been carried out, one in October 1944, the next in March 1945.

Story continues below...

The theory that the Nazis were in the process of developing a superbomb was first propagated by the leaders of the Third Reich themselves, who in the final days and weeks of the war kept promising a "Wunderwaffe" (super weapon) which would turn back the tide of the Allied march.

But, according to Sven Felix Kellerhoff, an editor and historian at Die Welt, there is no evidence that his was anything more than propaganda.

None of the evidence presented by ZDF or Karlsch is credible, he wrote last year, arguing that reports gained by the Allies from informants do not change the fact that "at no point did the Nazis have the industrial capability to split plutonium or uranium in sufficient quantities to create a nuclear bomb."

He also noted that Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels did not once mention the construction of such a bomb in his diary.

"If neither Hitler's closest confidant nor the top level of the army knew anything about any such project, how likely is it really that it existed?", Kellerhoff concludes.

The Local Europe GmbH
Schwedter Strasse 227
10435 Berlin
Germany

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Pershing Square through the years

2016-05-12

latimes.com

Los Angeles Times

Pershing Square, one of L.A.'s oldest public spaces, was remade to make room for a parking garage underneath it in the 1950s and most recently redesigned in 1994 by Mexican architect Ricardo Legorreta and landscape architect Laurie Olin. Along with bright color and a good deal of hardscape, their design added walls and towers to the existing parking ramps along the perimeter, redoubling the sense that the park is cut off from the life of the surrounding city.



A rendering of a proposal for Pershing Square by French landscape firm Agence Ter, which won a design competition to remake the space in downtown Los Angeles. (Pershing Square Renew)

L.A. Councilmember Jose Huizar announced Thursday that a team led by French landscape



architecture firm Agence Ter has won a design competition to remake Pershing Square, shown last month. Mark Boster / Los Angeles Times

One of Los Angeles' oldest public spaces, Pershing Square, then known as Central Park, is shown in 1885. The view is northwest from Sixth and Hill streets with the old Normal School building in the background left. In the left center is St. Paul's Church, which was torn down to make way for the Biltmore Hotel. (Padilla

Company)

Pershing Square in 1890, when it was known as Central Park. The Normal School is in the background. (Los Angeles Times)

Shown is a northerly view of the public space that was officially designated Pershing Square in 1918. (Los Angeles Times)

A northwest view of Pershing Square in an undated photo. The Biltmore Hotel is at left, with



the Philharmonic Auditorium in the background. (Los Angeles Times)

Pershing Square, named for World War I Gen. John J. Pershing, is shown in the 1920s. (Los Angeles Times)

Construction of the underground parking garage at Pershing Square continues on Feb. 1, 1952. In the background is the Biltmore Hotel. (Paul Calvert / Los Angeles Times)



(Los Angeles Times)

Pershing Square in October 1954. (Los Angeles Times)

Pershing Square photographed from the roof of the Biltmore Hotel in 1984. (Ian Dryden/Los Angeles Times)

(Al Seib / Los Angeles Times)

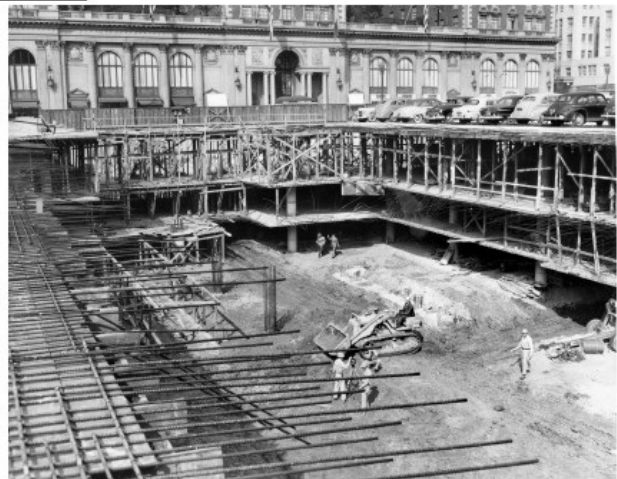
Pershing Square was most recently redesigned in 1994 by

Mexican architect Ricardo Legorreta and landscape architect Laurie Olin. Along with bright color and a good deal of hardscape, their design added walls and towers to the existing parking ramps along the perimeter. (Los Angeles Times)



The winning proposal to redesign Pershing Square calls for the walls, ramps and other barriers that line the edges of the park to be cleared away. (Los Angeles Times)

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Phantom Rabbit Monster: Rochdale, Lancashire - Beachcombing's Bizarre History Blog

strangehistory.net

Beachcombing's Bizarre History Blog

The outlandish, the anomalous and the curious from the last five thousand years

Phantom Rabbit Monster: Rochdale, Lancashire January 14, 2016

Author: Beach Combing | in : Modern , [trackback](#)

Cum.
BAUM, see **Balm**.
BAUM-RAPPIT, *s.b.* **Lan.** An apparition or imaginary appearance.
Lan. There is a passage in Rochdale leading to St. Mary's Church called 'The Baum.' A man went through this passage late at night and afterwards this dialogue took place: 'Wot dost' think I seed last night? I seed a rappit.' 'That's nought, a rappit's common enoof.' 'But this were a baum-rappit.' The phr. is in use at the present time when a person says he has seen an appearance of some kind, which is thought unlikely or merely imaginary, 'It's nowt but a baum-rappit' (S.W.); 'Th' worst boggart there is upo' this country side. . . . I'd back it again oather witch, fairy . . . Baum Rappit, Radeliffe Dog, or the dule hissel, *Wagon Old Cronies* (1875) ii; I have twice met with those who believed in the baum-rappit, i.e. the phantom rabbit that is supposed to haunt the cloughs, *Manch. City News* (July 18, 1896).
BAUNIA, *s.b.* **Irel.** A flannel head-dress.
Glw. A baunia is a large square piece of home-made flannel, like a handkerchief, worn by the women on their heads, and

baum rappit

Beach has recently been looking for the stranger monsters of British mythology and with some pride he comes today to the Baum-Rappit, a monster from Rochdale in Lancashire. What was the Baum-Rappit? Well as the name suggests it seems to have been a diabolical rabbit. Wright in his incredibly useful dialect dictionary comes up with this small dialogue:

There is a passage in Rochdale

leading to St. Mary's Church called 'The Baum.' A man went through this passage late at night and afterwards this dialogue took place: 'Wot dost' think I seed last night? I seed a rappit.' 'That's nought, a rappit's common enoof.' 'But this were a baum-rappit.'

Now what to make of that gnomic passage? Beach has not the slightest idea, but we seem to be dealing with a Rochdale boggart. It would be tempting to take this as a joke boggart: 'Oh God, the rabbit's coming', not least because Wright quotes a correspondent: 'The phr. [Baum Rappit] is in use at the present time when a person says he has seen an appearance of some kind, which is thought unlikely or merely imaginary, 'It's nowt but a baum-rappit' (S.W.)

But two considerations: first, the worst bite that Beach has ever had from an animal was from a rabbit; and, second, Wright quotes the following passage from the Manchester City News 'I have twice met with those who believed in the baum-rappit, i.e. the phantom rabbit that is supposed to haunt the cloughs', *Manchester City News* (18 July, 1896). This newspaper is not, unfortunately, scanned so it has proved impossible to check it: at least for the purposes of this post.

Why were grown men and women frightened of phantom rabbits in the nineteenth century? This is one of seven or eight rabbit examples on file. The only insight Beach can give is that boggarts in the countryside, though not normally in cities, changed into different animals, typically coloured white: white calf, white dog etc. Was the fearful Rappit just the main mask put on by this urban bogie? There is also the point that witches changed into hares and rabbits, something visited previously on this blog in relation to the funniest witch trial in

history. Was the Baum Rappit something to do with Lancashire's numerous populations of cunning men and women. Perhaps...

If anyone can help, do please get in touch: drbeachcombing AT yahoo DOT com
Particularly if you find rabbits scary.

First, Bruce T writes in with an important addition. There is a Baum Rappit video! Absolutely brilliant.

And it gets better, Bruce continues:

It seems the terrifying Baum Rappit has long history around that church. In the meager amount of info available on the net it seems it's been scaring the folks of that village since at the least the mid-17th century. It's said to have 125 year cycle of appearance, but it seems to make exceptions. There's a fellow on youtube who's claimed to have seen it twice in his lifetime, but I haven't taken time to watch the vid. I liked the provincialism of the storyteller in your report. The Baum Rappit was the best bogart in the land, all others be damned! I've got a feeling village loafers having been milking strangers for a couple of pints with versions of the Rappit tale for centuries. Also note: In 1979, Jimmy Carter, then President of the United States, went fishing. While fishing his jonboat was attacked by a swimming rabbit that Carter had to fight off with an oar. As the press corps in those three network days covered Presidential vacations heavily, there are photos of the rabbit both approaching and fleeing from the boat. As a "Baum rappit" was type of bogey that the correspondent would put up against any "witch, spirit, or bogart" in the county, what other kind of rabbit would take on the most powerful man on the face of the earth? None other than a Baum Rappit in the flesh. We're set for life Beach, we've proven the existence of the elusive Baum Rappit.

David O: Hey, you've probably seen this mysterious Britain on this: The name of the church being "St Mary's in the Baum" supports the idea that baum is the name of a plant, not a passage. Maybe the "18th century local herbalists" that used the Lemon Balm are your Lancastrian cunning men and women? Do you get bonus points if your herbs come from consecrated ground?

But on the other hand, I keep hearing the poem at the end of the page in Elmer Fudd's voice ("kill the wabbit, kill the wabbit"), and then I can't help but think the whole thing's a local joke. I'm struck by how rabbit-like the behaviour in the first link is – lookout pose on hind legs, cleaning the face, scrabbling in loose soil, going ears-up at the sound of cats, even not being bothered by the sound of a gun (in my experience, short sharp sounds like fireworks don't bother rabbits much). That all sounds like someone observed a live rabbit's behaviour to me, plus they're crepuscular, so you're most likely to see one on the way home from the pub. There's also the fact that nobody describes the rabbit as being bigger than normal – ghostly animals (I'm thinking Black Shuck here) so often seem to be larger-than-life. The obvious explanation is "albino rabbit", but those guys have a life expectancy of about -5 minutes in the wild – they have a rabbit's natural inclination to hunker down and hide, but they don't realise they practically glow in the dark. And you can spot them a mile off – no way is an albino rabbit going to "disappear into thin air".

Here: is an example of an albino cropping up in the wild, so they do happen occasionally.

Chris S writes: Perhaps the phantom rabbit was a pooka, "A fairy spirit in animal form, always very large. The Pooka appears here and there, now and then, to this one and that one. A benign but mischievous creature. Very fond of rum pots, crack pots, and how are you Mr. Wilson?"

29 Feb 2016:

Lehmansterms writes 'Doc, I was surprised no one suggested or quoted from "The Killer Rabbit of Caerbannoc" scene in The Holy Grail by the sublime Monty Python in response to your Phantom Rabbit Monster blog entry. This would not be the first time I have discovered an erudite morsel hiding somewhere within a bit of otherwise self-sufficient seeming Python silliness. They often employed actual items from history – or occasionally obscure current affairs – as a springboard to creation of scenes like this which do not quote – or quote only obliquely – from the original sources and depend on the viewer's level of recognition of obscure references. <https://search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?p=holy+grail+killer+rabbit&ei=UTF-8&hspart=mozilla&hsimp=yhs-001> There are a number of segments of varying length you can view at the above URL.

Ruththeunstoppablycurious: Well, a further thought on this one, though it has been bothering me since the first time I read it and I finally realized why. The word Baum is an old German word for tree, which I'm assuming these people would have been familiar with. Not in the sense of being familiar with German, but some words come down through the ages and usages relatively unchanged and with the same meaning. I would swear I remember learning somewhere that English has many roots in common with some of the Germanic language?

Bruce T writes: In the mountains east of me, there's a hare that is called the snowshoe hare, due to its large feet, an adaptation to deep snow. The snowshoe hare has one other adaptation to the snow, it turns white in the winter. Our snowshoe hare has a European cousin, the European mountain hare, or Irish hare, that shares the winter color switch. Where is the southern limit of the native range of the mountain hare in Great Britain? A "hair" south of Manchester. The European mountain hare has another distinguishing characteristic, it's extremely fast. It can top out at around forty miles an hour. Here we have a color changing hare, probably always rare in the Manchester region that seems to disappear in an instant. What better for a bunny bogey?

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Philadelphia police van is disguised as Google Maps vehicle

May 13, 2016

yahoo.com

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Philadelphia police officers attached a large Google Maps logo to a surveillance van in an apparent attempt to disguise it as one of the company's street-filming cars.

Police spokesman Lt. John Stanford said Friday that no one was authorized by the department to place the decal on the van. He says it appeared officers were "being creative."

The department was made aware of the decal by a news outlet Wednesday and it was removed the same day.

A Google spokeswoman confirms the van was not part of its Street View fleet and says it's looking into the report.

The fleet records panoramic street views. The most common vehicles used are compact cars mounted with cameras and wrapped in the company's logo and mapping graphics.

—
Online:

<https://www.google.com/maps/streetview/understand/>

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Pimp 'vampire' preyed on Australian women

April 2, 2016

smh.com.au

<http://www.smh.com.au/world/us-court-forces-pimp-vampire-to-pay-australian-victim-more-than-500000-20160401-gnwnej.html>

US court forces pimp 'vampire' to pay Australian victim more than \$500,000

Sex traffic victim: 'I was like a robot'

Katie Lang spoke with 60 Minutes in February about her escape from a notorious sex trafficker known as the 'vampire pimp'. Vision: Nine Network.

PT1M13S 620 349

A notorious sex trafficker known as the "vampire pimp" has suffered a major loss in a US court, which more than quadrupled the payout awarded to one of his Australian victims.

Damion Baston's appeal in the District Court in Florida spectacularly backfired after the three-panel judge not only confirmed his 27-year jail sentence handed down in 2014, but awarded one of his Australian victims \$US400,000 (\$521,615) in extra restitution.

Katie Lang, who first met Baston on the Gold Coast, was a star witness in the case against the Jamaican pimp, who beat, humiliated and forced women into sex slavery in Australia, the Middle East and America.



Katie Lang and the 'Vampire Pimp', Damion Baston.

Katie Lang and the 'Vampire Pimp', Damion Baston. *Photo: 60 Minutes*

Ms Lang went public with her ordeal in February, speaking to Channel Nine's *60 Minutes*.

Judge William Pryor slammed Baston, a powerfully-built pimp who forced his female sex slaves to inject him with steroids to help maintain his physique.

Judge Pryor also detailed how Baston had "Transylvanian tendencies" and physically transformed himself to look like a vampire "complete with yellow contact lenses and gold-plated fangs".

Katie Lang was a victim of Damion Baston, the "vampire pimp". *Photo: Supplied*



Katie Lang was a victim of Damion Baston, the "vampire pimp".

"Baston forced numerous women to prostitute for him by beating them, humiliating them and threatening to kill them, and he pimped them around the world, from Florida to Australia to the United Arab Emirates," the judge wrote.

Given the code name KL in court to protect her identity, Ms Lang was awarded \$US78,000 (\$101,715) in restitution at his US trial.

Baston asked in his appeal for that to be wiped. The judges not only dismissed his request, but awarded her an additional \$US400,000.



Damion Baston has been forced to pay Katie Lang more than half a million dollars.

Damion Baston has been forced to pay Katie Lang more than half a million dollars. *Photo: 60 Minutes*

The figure is the amount of money Baston kept from what she made from working as a prostitute in Australia.

"Baston argues that he does not owe restitution to KL for her prostitution in Australia because the jury did not convict him of that conduct,

but that argument is baffling," Judge Pryor wrote.

Baston learned how to be a pimp from the book *Pimpology*, written by Pimpin' Ken, which preached recruiting women who were sexually abused as children and for the victims to refer to the pimp as "Daddy".

Katie Lang, back in Australia. *Photo: 60 Minutes*

"But Baston was not always faithful to the laws of *Pimpology*," the judge noted.

"Unlike Pimpin' Ken who rejected the use of violence, Baston punched, slapped, choked, and threatened to kill his victims whenever they got 'out of line'."

Baston met Ms Lang at a nightclub on Queensland's Gold Coast when she was 24 years old



Katie Lang, back in Australia.

and he said he would help with her dream of opening her own restaurant.

The judge detailed how Baston, however, sent her to have sex with clients throughout Australia at prices he determined, beat her regularly and threatened to hurt her family if she stopped.

Ms Lang also prostituted for Baston in the United Arab

Emirates, Florida and Texas.

"One night, Baston suspected that KL was cheating on him," the judge wrote.

"He woke her up, punched her hard in the pelvis, threw her to the ground and strangled her.

"He heated up kitchen knives over an open flame and threatened to slit her throat.

"KL eventually escaped Baston's control after her family contacted the American embassy in Australia, which refused to let her return to Baston in the US.

AAP with Fairfax Media

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Pimp 'vampire' preyed on Aust women

- on April 2, 2016, 3:38 am

news.yahoo.com

<https://au.news.yahoo.com/world/a/31237253/pimp-vampire-preyed-on-aust-women/>

YAHOO! NEWS Pimp vampire preyed on Aust women - Yahoo7

An infamous sex trafficker known as Dracula who beat, humiliated and pimped women in Australia, the Middle East and America has suffered a major loss in a US court.

A three-judge panel in the District Court in Florida not only tossed out Damion Baston's appeal and confirmed a 27-year jail sentence handed down in Miami in 2014, but awarded one of his Australian victims \$US400,000 (\$A521,615) in extra restitution.

Judge William Pryor slammed Baston, a powerfully-built pimp from Jamaica who forced his female sex slaves to inject him with steroids to help maintain his physique.

Judge Pryor also detailed how Baston had "Transylvanian tendencies" and physically transformed himself to look like a vampire "complete with yellow contact lenses and gold-plated fangs".

"Baston forced numerous women to prostitute for him by beating them, humiliating them and threatening to kill them, and he pimped them around the world, from Florida to Australia to the United Arab Emirates," the judge wrote.

One of his Australian victims, given the code name KL in court to protect her identity, was awarded \$US78,000 (\$A101,715) in restitution at his US trial.

Baston asked in his appeal for that to be wiped.

The judges not only dismissed his request, but added \$US400,000 to KL's restitution.

The figure is the amount of money Baston kept from what KL made from working as a prostitute in Australia.

"Baston argues that he does not owe restitution to KL for her prostitution in Australia because the jury did not convict him of that conduct, but that argument is baffling," Judge Pryor wrote.

Baston learned how to be a pimp from the book Pimpology, written by Pimpin' Ken, which preached recruiting women who were sexually abused as children and for the victims to refer to the pimp as "Daddy".

"But Baston was not always faithful to the laws of Pimpology," the judge noted.

"Unlike Pimpin' Ken who rejected the use of violence, Baston punched, slapped, choked, and threatened to kill his victims whenever they got 'out of line'."

Baston met KL at a nightclub on Queensland's Gold Coast when she was 24 years old and

he said he would help with her dream of opening her own restaurant.

The judge detailed how Baston, however, sent KL to have sex with clients throughout Australia at prices he determined, beat her regularly and threatened to hurt her family if she stopped.

KL also prostituted for Baston in the United Arab Emirates, Florida and Texas.

"One night, Baston suspected that KL was cheating on him," the judge wrote.

"He woke her up, punched her hard in the pelvis, threw her to the ground and strangled her.

"He heated up kitchen knives over an open flame and threatened to slit her throat."

KL eventually escaped Baston's control after her family contacted the American embassy in Australia, which refused to let her return to Baston in the US.

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These Play-Doh Portraits Freak Us Out (But We Can't Stop Looking)

huffingtonpost.com

HUFFPOST WEIRD NEWS **People are now asking the artist to "smash my face up."**

05/13/2016 02:21 pm ET

- David Moya Reporter, The Huffington Post

A Portuguese artist is playing around with Play-Doh on the human face. It's fantastic, grotesque and — well, just see below.



- Tomba Lobos
- José Cardoso recently debuted a series of photos featuring bizarre mash-ups of his friends' faces with Play-Doh that matches their skin tones.



- Tomba Lobos
- The result looks like the living embodiment of The Weeknd's smash hit "Can't Feel My Face."



- Tomba Lobos
- Cardoso, who creates under the name "Ze," has his subjects squish and twist an orange-sized piece of the

modeling dough into any shape they chose. Then he photographs their creations and photoshops them onto portraits of those individuals.

- Tomba Lobos
- Cardoso, who is based in Porto, Portugal, said his striking pictures are open to a variety of interpretations.
- Tomba Lobos
- "There's a lot of theories about identity loss nowadays, about how social



networks can help you fake your real identity," Cardoso told HuffPost. "Why do people use photoshop in order to hide imperfections but never use that tool to enhance deficiencies?"



- Tomba Lobos
- He said his work could also be seen as a comment on how easy it is to get "plastic surgery to your face like it was made

of Play-Doh."



- Tomba Lobos
- "How come humans can't help but stare at disfigured faces, even moderate disfigurements?" the artist asked.



- Tomba Lobos
- Although Cardoso uses modern innovations to manipulate the images, his project is actually a tribute to old-school special effects like those seen in 1980s-era David Cronenberg films.



- Tomba Lobos
- "I'm a big fan of David Lynch as I am a big fan of those craziest Cronenberg movies,"

Cardoso said, referring to another director noted for his striking visual style. "I

do love old-school gory special effects."

- Tomba Lobos



- Tomba Lobos
- The portraits have been generating a strong reaction ever since Cardoso posted them at Behance.net, though not everyone is taken by the shocking images.



- Tomba Lobos
- "A lot of people are offended by the images, while others just think this is way too much aggressive," Cardoso

said. "I did this for fun, as a tribute to old-school special effects, an easy and clean way to create bizarre characters ... so I expected people to look at this in a more relaxed way and not in a negative way."



- Tomba Lobos
- Tomba Lobos
- Cardoso started on the project 10 months ago. He was surprised at how willing people were to pose for him.



- Tomba Lobos
- "I was hoping that two or three close friends would agree to help me, but every day I have private messages on my Facebook account like: 'Hey, I'm John, I really want you to smash my face up. How can we do this? Thanks!'" Cardoso said.
- Tomba Lobos
- He figures there's a simple reason why his project has

appealed to people.



- Tomba Lobos
- "People love selfies," he said. "People spend a lot of money

on their face because it is their greeting card, I guess."

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Police catch nursery-rhyming 'Gingerbread man' suspect

May 12, 9:25 AM EDT

ap.org

PITTSBURGH (AP) -- Sheriff's deputies say they've caught the gingerbread man, a Pittsburgh-area burglary suspect who referred to the nursery rhyme in taunting authorities who couldn't catch up to him.

Police say 25-year-old Heath Emory Miller was trying to hide in the attic of a home where police found him on Wednesday.

Emory is wanted on several warrants from burglaries in the Pittsburgh suburbs of West View and Ross Township.

On Monday, he escaped into the woods after Allegheny County deputies thought they had him cornered.

That night, Miller posted on Facebook saying, "They call me the gingerbread man. Catch me if u can. I'm running as fast as I can."

Miller remained jailed without an attorney Thursday.

The gingerbread man is a children's story about a cookie that runs away from those who try to eat him.

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Political climate and rapid growth in S-E Asia

TEXT OF THE PM'S SPEECH: PAGE 10

BIGGEST PLUS FACTOR

By CHIA POTEIK

MR. LEE KUAN YEW yesterday told a packed gathering of top executives and officials from various parts of the world that the political climate in South-east Asia today is the biggest plus factor for rapid development in the region.

The Prime Minister, who was making the closing speech at the end of the three-day conference at Shangri-La Hotel on Business Opportunities in the Pacific Basin, said:

Devastation

"South-east Asia has learnt the terrible lessons of conflict. The ruin and devastation that have overwhelmed both North and South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, are in striking contrast to the steady and rapid progress of Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore.

"This is very much in the consciousness of the leaders and of the peoples of the countries in South-east Asia.

"Then there is the experience of the Indonesian people. After nearly 20 profligate years under the late Dr. Soekarno, Indonesia, after painful beginnings, has now set course for economic development, seeking investments and rapid growth."

Optimism

Indicating his optimism about the region's continued stability, Mr. Lee said: "The prospect for stability and rapid growth is more than fair on the western rim of the Pacific Basin.

"For South-east Asia in particular, inputs of capital and technology from Japan, America and Western Europe will increase this rate of growth."

Only two riders clouded the horizon, population growth and the problem of guerrilla insurgency.

Population growth rate in most South-east Asian countries were still too high, running, at between 2½ and 3½ per cent. This did not bode well for long-term progress and political stability, though this trend might

FINAL DAY
OF THE
CONFERENCE:
SEE PAGE 11

change with the spread of education.

Of guerrilla insurgency, the Prime Minister said that the outlook was fairly optimistic when the Paris Agreement was signed in February this year, but the situation had become much grimmer by August, even before the American bombing of Cambodia was halted by a compromise between the White House and U.S. Congress.

Economic

He said that unexpectedly the Cambodian economy seemed better able to fight without, than with American air support, but it was difficult to predict the future.

If Cambodia grew neutral or pro-communist, South Vietnam might still be standing. Given time, Mr. Nixon's Guam doctrine of economic and military aid for countries to

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The Straits Times



MR. LEE

UPROAR AFTER SOVIET-CHILEAN CLASH AT UN ASSEMBLY

UNITED NATIONS, Thursday

'Fool' and 'liar' shouts by shoving envoys

SHOVING and shouting diplomats screamed "fool" and "liar" at each other across the General Assembly podium yesterday after the Soviet bloc made an appeal against the execution of a communist leader by Chile's military junta.

Soviet Ambassador Yakov A. Malik touched off the situation by demanding that Assembly President Leopoldo Benites, of Ecuador, and Secretary General Kurt Waldheim intercede with the Santiago regime to prevent the execution of Senator Luis Corvalan Lora, secretary of the outlawed Chilean Communist Party.

This brought Chilean Ambassador Raul Bazan Davila to the dais with an objection. Mr. Malik interrupted the



Battleground... at left, Mr. Davila; right, Mr. Baroody—UPI photo.

Chilean, contending he was not confining himself to a point of order.

At this juncture, Saudi Arabian Ambassador Jamil M. Baroody, who has a long reputation of moving into such situations, asked the Assembly to drop the debate.

Mr. Davila stood at the side of the rostrum while Mr. Baroody talked.

When the Saudi Arabian Ambassador referred to the post-revolution conditions in Chile, Mr. Davila was heard to say "fool."

Referee

Mr. Baroody, who is over 70, pushed his way to the side of the speakers' stand where Mr. Davila stood, and thrusting his body toward the younger man, vigorously shook his finger at him.

"Say you apologize," he demanded. "Nobody has ever called me a fool."

"You are a liar," Mr. Davila retorted.

Under-Secretary in charge of the General Assembly affairs, left his seat on the high dais and intervened, acting like a boxing referee.

The President eventually ruled that Mr. Davila must wait his turn to speak after Mr. Malik and the Soviet bloc delegates were heard.

When he gained the microphone, Mr. Davila denied Mr. Malik's report that Corvalan was to be executed. He said he was in good health awaiting a military tribunal. UPI.

Traffic jams

TRAFFIC came to a crawl for more than three hours along busy Paya Lebar, Upper Paya Lebar, Mountbatten and Old Airport Roads last night as motorists in Paya Lebar area celebrated the month-long carnival with processions.

Worst film

BORNEO, Thurs.—Bernardo Bertolucci's "Last Tango in Paris" was named the worst movie of the year by the critics of the University of London, a London magazine. —AP.

LATEST

No rally

NEW YORK, Thurs.—Stock prices failed to respond immediately to Government reports of a break in the inflation trend and were mixed in active trading today on the New York Stock Exchange.

The Dow Jones industrial average was 1,000.34 at 11 a.m. There were 124 advances and 94 declines among the 30 stocks in the Dow.

'Speculation'

WASHINGTON, Thurs.—State Department officials today labelled as "wild speculation" reports that the Japanese prime minister's trip to Peking last month is to pave the way for diplomatic relations between China and the United States.

Suspended

UNITED NATIONS, Thurs.—African states today succeeded in blocking the meeting of the General Assembly on the South African Foreign Minister's resignation. —UPI.

21 PAY CLAIMS

Ministry notices on Vashi flat door

By GERALD PEREIRA

THE Ministry of Labour yesterday posted notices of wage claims by 21 employees of four of Vashi's department stores on the front door flat of its managing director, Mr. Vashi C. Mahant, 40, at Emerald Mansions, off Orchard Road.

The claims, totalling \$15,994, were for salary, overtime pay and bonuses of the employees who included book-keepers, salesmen, salesgirls, a cashier and a woman clerk.

The workers were made jobless when the Vashi stores were closed for business over the weekend.

On Mr. Vashi's door were posted four Labour Ministry notices, signed by the Assistant Commissioner of Labour, Mr. Lee Chung Pak, and also details of complaints by employees.

The notices said that Mr. Vashi was required to be at the Labour Department at 2.15 p.m. on Oct. 18 where the complaints against him would be "incubated into."

The management declined comment.

However, it was learned late last night that the company closed for the day, immediately after the girls were taken ill at noon.

Business is expected to resume today.

The company, which produces dried rattle fish, employs about 120 workers, mostly women.

Nixon plea to Congress

WASHINGTON, Thurs.—President Nixon today urged Congress to restore "normal" relations with China in order to ensure that the country is not isolated in the world.

The President said that the U.S. is "seriously inadequate" without that provision. —UPI.

Tories in third place

LONDON, Thurs.—An opinion poll published only hours after the Opposition leader, Harold Wilson, pledged no coalition with the minority Liberal Party and the Conservative Government.

The poll, published in the London Times and the Guardian, credited the Labour and Liberal parties with 34 and 32 per cent respectively in voters' sympathy ratings. The Conservatives were listed with 31 per cent—only the second time a British government has been placed third by an opinion poll in modern times.

The findings by the Opinion Research Centre were published after Mr. Wilson told his party's annual conference he would fight the general election—due within five next 20 months—on a basis of "no electoral treaty, no political alliance, no deal with the Tories."

The poll held little

Inside WORKERS WARNED OF TOUTS

—PAGE 4

NIXON gets new trade powers
OPEN UP land for housing call to Govt
OVERSEAS training for disabled urged
COLOUR TV equipment under study
BONN's 10 target can be achieved
WORLD NEWS
CROSSWORD
ACROSS THE CAUSEWAY

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Boy's killings, 151 robberies

SAO PAULO, Brazil, Thurs.—A 14-year-old boy whose name has been confined to two murders and 151 armed robberies was all committed within a week.

The boy confessed he had a passion for love, took part in a robbery and shot a man dead in a street in Sao Paulo as well as a young man who donated a kidney to him. He would use his revenue—\$100 a day.

5 executed

TEHRAN, Thurs.—Army firing squads have executed five men for involvement in a smuggling opium and heroin. A Government spokesman announced yesterday. —AP.

Terror threat to Russians

BEIRUT, Thursday

PALESTINIAN guerrillas have threatened terror attacks against Soviet embassies unless the Kremlin bans Jewish emigration to Israel, according to a Beirut newspaper. The Soviet Union has never been a guerrilla target before.

The An Nahar said today the Eagles of the Revolution issued a "warning to the Soviet Union" in a letter sent to the newspaper.

An Nahar quoted the letter as saying "Russian embassies and interests in the Middle East and the world will be a target for the actions of our fighters if the Soviet Government does not stop the immigration operation into Israel."

The Soviet Union has always voiced support for the militant Arab governments and has been their main source of arms.

However, its relations with some of the more militant Arab governments has been strained as a result of the Soviet claims with the U.S.

In STOCKHOLM Bruno Kreisky said today his Government closed the Jewish refugee camps at Schvenau Castle last week because police uncovered a Palestinian link.

★ See Back Page—Col. 4

Game of death

JOHANNESBURG, Thurs.—A policeman died in hospital today after shooting himself in the head while playing Russian roulette with a group of friends. —Reuter.

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Poland to stage Pope John Paul II musical - BBC News

bbc.com



By News from Elsewhere... ..as found by BBC Monitoring

• 28 April 2016



Actor Jacek Kawalec has been cast in the lead role

Image copyrightEPA

A new musical about the life of Pope John Paul II will open in Poland early next year, the first to be produced in the late pontiff's home country.

Hundreds of tickets have already been sold for the show, entitled *Karol*, which will make its premiere in Krakow in February, Radio Poland reports. Born Karol Wojtyla, he was archbishop of the city for more than a decade prior to being elected Pope in 1978.

The production will use pop-rock songs and contemporary dance to tell his life story, against the backdrop of World War II, through decades of communism and its eventual collapse. "There is no other figure in the history of our country who embodies the most important events of the 20th Century that happened in Poland and Europe," artistic director Michal Kaczmarczyk tells *Rzeczpospolita Polska*.

Taking on the lead role is Jacek Kawalec, who says his priority is to portray "not only a priest, but above all a man who played sports, had fun with his friends, and loved the theatre".

Producers say they're keen to highlight sides of the Pope's character that Poles may not know about. The musical's website lists a number of examples, including an exchange with reporters who asked about his health, to which he responded: "I do not know, I haven't read the morning newspapers."

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/* Copyright 2014 Evernote Corporation. All rights reserved. */ .en-markup-crop-options { top: 18px !important; left: 50% !important; margin-left: -100px !important; width: 200px !important; border: 2px rgba(255,255,255,.38) solid !important; border-radius: 4px !important; } .en-markup-crop-options div div:first-of-type { margin-left: 0px !important; }

Canoe - CNEWS

**BOB HOLLIDAY -- Sun Media**

Jul 16, 2007

, Last Updated: 9:46 AM ET

Until reports of a murder in Cat Lake, Ont., in 1898 surfaced in Winnipeg, few settlers knew about the Windigo, the worst kind of evil spirit in Algonquin folklore.

To the ancient Algonquin (which includes Cree, Ojibway and Blackfeet) of old, Windigo was known by many names such as Chenoo, Atchen, Witiku, and Kewok.

In January, Manitoba Provincial Police officers arrested two members of the village of no-treaty Cree at Lac Seul for killing their chief,

Ahwahsakahmig.

SHOOT HIM

The chief claimed he'd been invaded by Windigo and begged four villagers to shoot him.

"Ahwahsakahmig lifted his right arm and showed us where to shoot," said one of the men through an interpreter.

The chief's body was taken to the edge of the village, covered with brush, and destroyed by fire. The two men who complied with his wishes were later convicted of manslaughter and sentenced to four months in jail.

Back then, the justice system in northwestern Ontario was the responsibility of Manitoba.

The sacred legends of the Sandy Lake Cree -- as told by Carl Ray and James Steven -- claim "the demented Windigo is the most horrible creature in the land of the Cree and Ojibway" Legend claims a Cree village at Sandy Lake Ghost Post was destroyed by fire caused by a Windigo which was once a normal human who was taken over by "a savage cannibalistic spirit. When the ugly creature attacks, it shows men no mercy. This monster will kill and devour its own family members to satisfy its lust for human flesh." The first report of a Windigo in Manitoba occurred at Norway House in 1913, when a young Cree woman became delirious and began speaking in a language unknown to her family and friends.

According to legend, the superstitious Cree hanged the woman from a tree and buried her body under a pile of rocks to prevent the Windigo from escaping and invading other villagers.

The story ran rampant through the fur trade, but despite a long investigation, no charges were laid by the RCMP.

At Lac la Ronge in northern Saskatchewan, an insane man is said to have beaten his wife and child to death with a club. The village voted to stake the man, naked, in the bush to be stung to death by mosquitoes.

To make sure Windigo did not remain, the village was burned and the people moved.

Mounties also received word that a father compelled his daughter to chop off his head after he claimed to have been invaded by Windigo.

The legend claimed the father sharpened his axe, took his daughter into the woods and commanded her to cut off his head. When she refused, she was threatened with death.

"If you don't kill me, I shall kill all of you. A Windigo has come into me and I must do what he tells me. He tells me that you must kill me to stop me from killing you and your brothers and sisters," the man is said to have told his daughter.

When the man placed his neck across a log, the daughter chopped off his head.

The demented man was buried with his head by his side. In order to trap the Windigo, the log used as a chopping block was set on top of the grave and covered with stones.

Other legends claim the bodies of people invaded by Windigo were chopped into pieces because of the belief that if the evil spirit was abused, it might think twice about entering another human.

The last reported Windigo "sighting" in Manitoba occurred in January 1934 at Lac Brochet, 325 miles north of The Pas.

The RCMP dispatched Sgt. Percy Rose to investigate after reports that a man had been left outside to freeze to death.

TIED TO SLED

The story goes that the victim became violent and abused his fellow trappers as they returned to base camp located about 40 miles north of Reindeer Lake. Mounties were told that the man became so violent that his companions were forced to tie the man to his sled for the trip home.

The party was so afraid the man had been invaded by a Windigo, they left him tied to his sled overnight and he froze to death.

RCMP also heard the leaders of the party left the demented man tied to his sled because they feared Windigo would enter the shelter and invade their bodies.

No reports of charges could be found.

There have been no recent sighting of a Windigo, but that doesn't mean one is not ready to take on the form of a half-beast, half-man and again begin to feast on human flesh and blood.

The Sun thanks Karen Fulham of Manitoba Justice and the staff at the Provincial Archives for their co-operation. Bob Holliday may be reached by e-mail at bholliday@wpgsun.com.

"If you don't kill me, I shall kill all of you. A Windigo has come into me and I must do what he tells me."

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« [When Christians Question Your Atheism, Here Are Some Excellent Responses for Them](#)

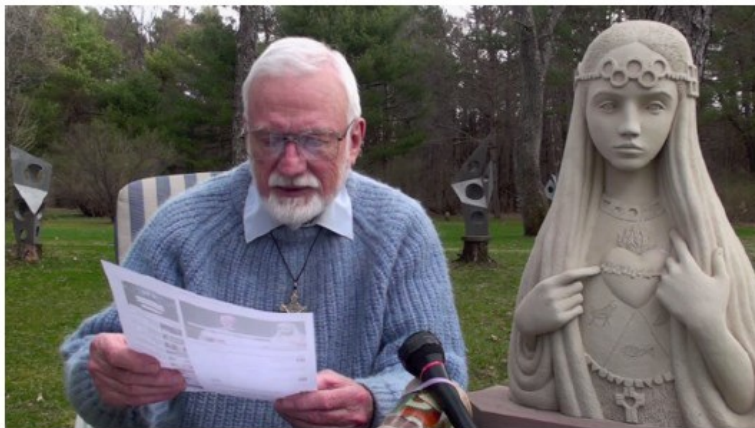
[The Disturbing Truth About Mercy Multiplied, a Christian Counseling Center](#) »

Christian "Prophet" Explains How Prince's Death Fulfilled Biblical Prophecy

April 26, 2016 20:16-04-26T05:00:42+00:00 by Hemant Mehta<<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/friendlyatheist/author/hemant-mehta/>>

William Tapley, a.k.a. the Third Eagle of the Apocalypse, wants you to know that Prince's death [verifies biblical prophecy](https://youtu.be/mr-SqCWoe-E)<<https://youtu.be/mr-SqCWoe-E>>.

Why? Because, as a letter writer explains, he was the Prince (of peace!), referenced purple rain in his music, and talked about partying like it's 1999.



Prince's Death on 4/21 Verifies Bible Prophecy



Tapley points out the date of Prince's death is also very significant. For some reason. Makes perfect sense, right? Of course it does. The self-proclaimed Third Eagle of the Apocalypse said so, dammit, and who are you to question him?

Tapley, you might recall, wrote a [memorable campaign song](http://www.patheos.com/blogs/friendlyatheist/2012/07/25/mitt-romney-a-hero-in-my-mind/) for Mitt Romney in 2012 and [made a video](http://youtu.be/LOQsvOkkLg4) years ago describing the "Phallic symbols at Denver International Airport." If that doesn't make you take him seriously, nothing will.

(via [Christian Nightmares](http://christiannightmares.tumblr.com/post/143380865701/william-tapley-says-princes-death-verifies-bible))

Related posts from Friendly Atheist:

(The Legacy of Prince's Jehovah's Witness Beliefs, As Explained by a Former Believer)

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(Christopher Hitchens Didn't "Contemplate Conversion" on His Deathbed)

Christopher Hitchens Didn't "Contemplate Conversion" on His

(Members of the Wu-Tang Clan Will Appear at the Reason Rally)

Members of the Wu-Tang Clan Will Appear at the Reason Rally

(The Inherent Contradiction in "God's Not Dead")

The Inherent Contradiction in "God's Not Dead"

« When Christians Question Your Atheism, Here Are Some Excellent Responses for Them

The Disturbing Truth About Mercy Multiplied, a Christian Counseling Center »

About Hemant Mehta

Hemant Mehta is the editor of Friendly Atheist, appears on the [Atheist](http://www.patheos.com/blogs/friendlyatheist/2016/04/26/christian-prophet-explains-how-princes-death-fulfilled-biblical-prophecy/?utm_source=fark&utm_medi...)



Voice channel <<https://www.youtube.com/user/TheAtheistVoice/>> on YouTube, and co-hosts the uniquely-named [Friendly Atheist Podcast](http://friendlyatheistpodcast.com/) <<http://friendlyatheistpodcast.com/>>. You can read much more about him [here](http://www.patheos.com/blogs/friendlyatheist/about-the-contributors/) <<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/friendlyatheist/about-the-contributors/>>.

117 Comments

Friendly Atheist

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Join the discussion...

**Nik Snow** • 21 hours ago

A fine example of a raving drooling Xtian dimwit, a knob-end among many, standing proud, and performing true to make believe Xtian prophecy and biblical interpretation...He comes from a long line of total Xtian inspired fuckwits... More sense in the damned statue next to him... You have got to feel sorry for his family... well someone should!

29 ^ | v • Reply • Share >

**RayM** → Nik Snow • 21 hours ago

Don't hold back, Nik, tell us how you really feel! :-)) Now, if only I could up-vote more than once...

10 ^ | v • Reply • Share >

**Lee Miller** → RayM • 20 hours ago

"Fuckwits". How are there still so many of them in the world today?

7 ^ | v • Reply • Share >

**RayM** → Lee Miller • 20 hours ago

I suspect they were always there, and probably always will be. It's just that the internet has made them much more visible.

7 ^ | v • Reply • Share >

**Robert Templeton** → RayM • 19 hours ago

And yet they are still so difficult to swat. The internet was supposed to make it easier! /s

5 ^ | v • Reply • Share >

**Lee Miller** → RayM • 20 hours ago

Oh, definitely. I guess my question is really how, with mandatory education and a society where everything we do is based on science and technology, these religious mythologist nitwits still have a following. I mean, my god, they all have iPads and internet . . . do they think Gawd made those things?

5 ^ | v • Reply • Share >

**MystiqueLady** → Nik Snow • 19 hours ago

The scary part is that he claims he has followers -- people to stupid to think up this stuff for themselves.

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share >

**Josh** → Nik Snow • 3 hours ago

What in good god's name is an Xtian dimwit?

Do you know the problem with apocryphal atheists? They think nothing is

Do you know the problem with evangelical atheists? They think nothing is greater than themselves.

You are a self-absorbed assclown, and you matter not at all. Your religion even says that you matter not, yet you still pretend to try to matter.

Go away => The world doesn't need you. Please drink the flavor-aide.

^ | v · Reply · Share >



Thomas Villarreal → Josh · 2 hours ago

The NT was written in Greek. The universe cares nothing on humanity. Atheist is a religion like nude is an outfit and bald is a hair style. No, sorry, that's you.

^ | v · Reply · Share >



Brother Bluto · 20 hours ago

I want a cool name like "the Third Eagle of the Apocalypse." I am thinking something along the lines like the Second Badger of the Hurricane.

21 ^ | v · Reply · Share >



Virtual Blue → Brother Bluto · 17 hours ago

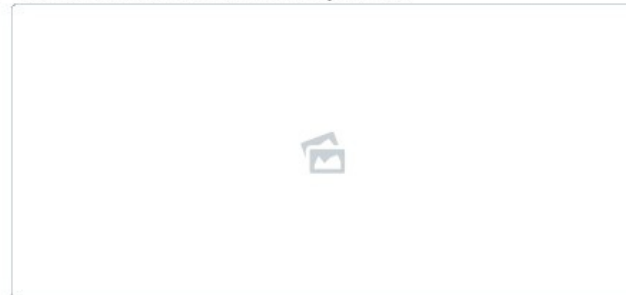
My suggestion: the Fifth Capybara of Mild Disapproval.

9 ^ | v · Reply · Share >



Prairiedog → Virtual Blue · 17 hours ago

The Firth of Forth Fifth First (of my name).



7 ^ | v · Reply · Share >



ZenDruid → Prairiedog · 17 hours ago

The Chrome Gnome of the Roman Dome.

5 ^ | v · Reply · Share >



Syzygy → Prairiedog · 12 hours ago

I saw an article about nice bridges. The Firth of Forth was 5th.

Not hard to remember.

2 ^ | v · Reply · Share >



Sophia Sadek → Prairiedog · 15 hours ago

Now, that's my kind of holy spirit.

2 ^ | v · Reply · Share >



Virtual Blue → Prairiedog · 2 hours ago

Try saying that ten times quickly.
You'd need a mop to take kare of the spittle.

^ | v · Reply · Share >



CanuckAmuck → Brother Bluto · 17 hours ago

I dibs Penultimate Beaver of the Overcast Day.

9 ^ | v · Reply · Share >

-  **Uzza** → CanuckAmuck · 15 hours ago
I've got The Wet Beaver of the Quaking Earth
7 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›
-  **XaurreauX** → Uzza · 15 hours ago
Consider me a follower. ;^)
4 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›
-  **Uzza** → XaurreauX · 15 hours ago
You'll have to be Baptized, by Immersion. Are you up for that?
4 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›
-  **Brother Bluto** → Uzza · 14 hours ago
I've seen movies about that. I mean I've heard they make movies about that.
4 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›
-  **XaurreauX** → Uzza · 12 hours ago
It depends. Immersion in what?
2 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›
-  **CanuckAmuck** → Uzza · 15 hours ago
Giggity!
4 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›
-  **John Milligan** → CanuckAmuck · 12 hours ago
Reminds me of Phil, Prince of Insufficient Light from Dilbert.
2 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›
-  **Cozmo the Magician** → CanuckAmuck · 16 hours ago
Fine, I will blame YOU for this shitty weather.
2 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›
-  **CanuckAmuck** → Cozmo the Magician · 16 hours ago
Mine is an evil laugh!
- 
- 5 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›
-  **Sophia Sadek** → CanuckAmuck · 15 hours ago
Too erotic.
^ | v · Reply · Share ›
-  **Prairiedog** → Brother Bluto · 19 hours ago
I think you're trying too hard.
- 

5 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



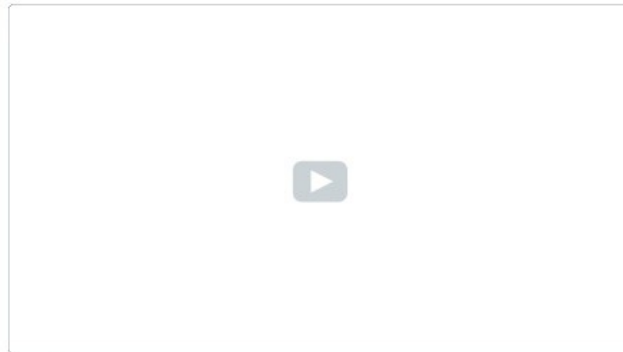
John Milligan → Brother Bluto • 12 hours ago

"We don't need no stinking Badgers!"

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



NOGODZ20 → John Milligan • 10 hours ago



1 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



Sophia Sadek → Brother Bluto • 15 hours ago

Would that be a honey badger? I hear they are bad-ass.

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



Brother Bluto → Sophia Sadek • 14 hours ago

You know it!

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



Angela Monger → Brother Bluto • 11 hours ago

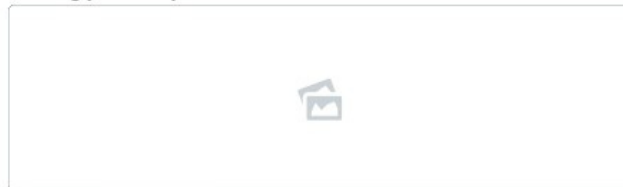
I will herefore be known as the Raccoon of the Foragers of the Forest.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



Prairiedog → Angela Monger • 8 hours ago

Sending you all my crusts.



They're in the Wardrobe.

^ | v • Reply • Share >



Cozmo the Magician → Brother Bluto • 16 hours ago

Well it is almost May so the "Lord of 'winter mix weather' (*)" has almost gone away.

For those of you in the southern/and/or/western parts that means a lovely combo of rain/sleet/snow/slush all at the same time.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share >

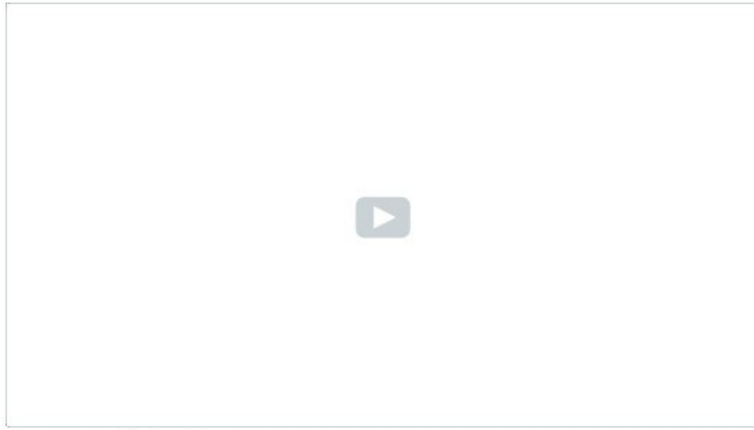


Brother Bluto • 20 hours ago

Right off the bat he calls Prince's death as premature. How does he know that? Don't most xtians always say everything happens according to God's plan. If so God took him right when he was supposed to go.

You might think this video is crazy. I am fond of his interpretation of the Gangnam Style video and how it foretells of China and Russia invading the US. Just click anywhere on the video

any more on the video.



10 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

**oikos** → Brother Bluto · 20 hours ago

I can't click, I just can't. :)

8 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

**ginger50** → oikos · 19 hours ago

I clicked and now will have to spend the rest of the day trying to get this crazy maze of mental illness logic out of my head.

4 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

**Kevin K** → oikos · 17 hours ago

Do it!! It's pure comedy gold. If you're not peeing yourself laughing, you have no sense of humor whatsoever.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

**oikos** → Kevin K · 16 hours ago

I've seen his videos on JMG before. He is truly a nutjob.

2 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

**OhBother66** → oikos · 3 hours ago

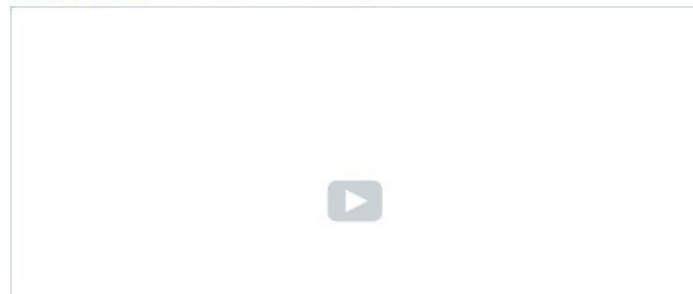
Yeah, I won't click, although, I'm waiting for one of these nut-jobs to declare Facebook to be the new Tower of Babel, if one hasn't already.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›

**Dawny_G** → Brother Bluto · 15 hours ago

Oh FFS! A prophetic math lesson! This brand of crazy just can't be...can't be...ugh my brain just imploded. I have a crazy theory also. Could it be...even a little tiny bit...that Gangnam Style could just be...now hear me out---just a silly dance?

3 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

**CanuckAmuck** → Brother Bluto · 17 hours ago

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



MystiqueLady → Brother Bluto • 19 hours ago

This man just has WAY TOO MUCH time on his hands.

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



ginger50 → Brother Bluto • 19 hours ago

Funny and sad at the same time that he has subscribers.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



Brother Bluto → ginger50 • 18 hours ago

Where must you be from an emotional and mental standpoint to listen to this guy and think he makes enough sense to subscribe to him? Scary.

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



allein • 21 hours ago

"Tapley, you might recall"

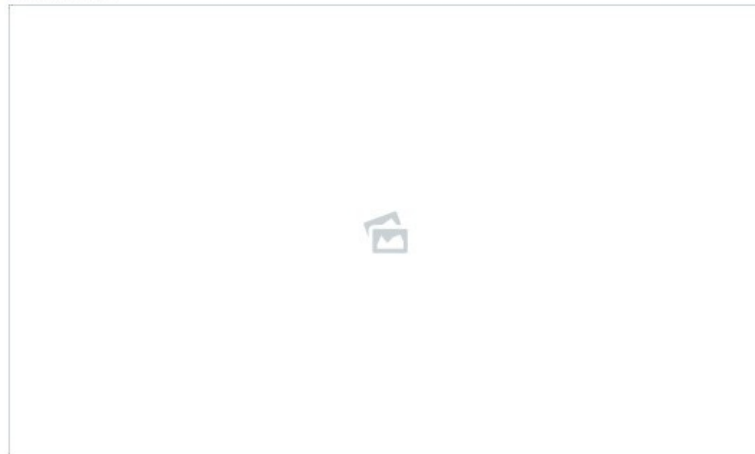
Thankfully, no.

10 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



Vernon Balbert • 17 hours ago

You think Denver has phallic symbols, take a look at LAX. My friend calls it "the dildo farm."



7 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



NOGODZ20 → Vernon Balbert • 14 hours ago

Looks like a bumper crop, to boot.

4 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



John Milligan → Vernon Balbert • 12 hours ago

I love the signs to the airport around LAX. It's a silhouette of a plane at an angle with LAX below it so it looks like X LAX. :P

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share >

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Proof of Bigfoot is in the bones, college instructor says

thereflector.com

Professor believes he's found proof the beast resides in the Mount St. Helens Area



Bone with human-like teeth imprints

Photo courtesy of Mitchel Townsend

Bone with human-like teeth imprints

THIS PHOTO SHOWS a bone with human-like teeth imprints, including a front incisor and lateral incisor, according to Mitchel Townsend. The research compiled by Townsend shows the bite ratio is 2 1/2 times larger than that of a human.



Photo

BONE

courtesy of Mitchel Townsend

BONE

ANOTHER BONE SHOWS an imprint of a human-like tooth, according to Mitchel Townsend.



MITCHEL TOWNSEND

Justyna Tomtas / jtomas@chronline.com

Bio Box

About Mitchel Townsend:

- Mitchel Townsend is a professor at Centralia College and Lower Columbia College. He has a master's degree from Pepperdine University and has completed doctoral studies at the University of Calgary in Alberta.
- He has taught Bigfoot courses at Centralia College for two years.

• His first course, "CSI Bigfoot, Legend Meets Sasquatch," was based on the work of Geoff Meldrum, from Idaho State University's Department of Biological Sciences and received national attention.

• His current course, "Bigfoot Solved, Proving the Legal and Scientific Case for the Addition of a New Great Apes Species in the Pacific Northwest," is currently ongoing at Centralia College. The course combines his original research and features his newest discoveries.

Posted: Wednesday, May 27, 2015 12:00 am

Is the mystery of Bigfoot's existence finally solved?

One Centralia College professor said he has discovered scientific evidence that proves the creature's existence.

He believes the information will be one of the biggest scientific finds of the century.

Mitchel Townsend, a Winlock resident and teacher in the college's Continuing Education program, said he was walking through the woods near Ryan Lake in East Lewis County when he came across a stack of bones. The find itself was unusual since predators typically disperse remains rather quickly, he said. Upon further inspection, he noticed large human-like teeth imprints in the bones.

"I got to looking at the bones and they had been gnawed on by what looked to me to be giant human teeth," he said.

After two of his students from Lower Columbia College found two more stacks of bones on the south side of Mount St. Helens, he said it became clear the "kill sites" were similar in a variety of ways. The bone stacking technique is specific to a humanoid and was cited as human behavior, he said.

Again, human-like teeth imprints were notched into the bones.

No predator impressions or tool marks were found on the remains, and after consulting with the Department of Fish and Wildlife, Townsend said, all natural predators in the area were ruled out.

The two additional sites located by his students shed more light on the creature responsible for the activity.

The trio found footprints with a length of 16 inches, he claims. Height, weight and proportion calculations, paired with the length of the stride between steps, conferred the creature had to be about 8 feet, 8 inches tall. Although the footprints looked human, they had a much wider and broader profile and did not have an arch.

"If you add it all up, you have an 8-foot, 8-inch tall creature that is killing animals at different areas of Mount St. Helens with its bare hands, chewing them up, literally skin and bones and all, and spitting them out between its legs," Townsend said.

The teeth marks in the bone show what Townsend said were impressions of incisors and canines, but 90 percent of the teeth were beyond "the range of human possibility." As for the mouth size, the bite ratio was calculated at 2 1/2 times wider than that of a person.

The bones also showed dental signatures and different human chewing strategies from ancient caveman, including bone peeling, he said.

"The bottom line is only humans do that because of the shape of our teeth and the shape of our jaw so we have to gnaw on the edge of (the bone)," Townsend said.

A double arch structure also showed the teeth were closely related to the Neanderthals, and the molars left triangular impressions as opposed to circular impressions an ape or chimpanzee would leave, he said.

The evidence is what the professor said was forensic dental evidence and behavioral evidence showing the massive creature is part human. His discovery aims to prove there is in fact a hominin species living in the area of Mount St. Helens that derived from the breeding of Native Americans and a giant ape.

"My theory is it's not an ape, it's a hybrid that has been interbreeding with Native Americans for the last 80,000 years," Townsend said. "That's why it is so smart and it has human teeth."

Townsend's information will be published in a research paper, and he challenges the scientific community to discredit his information. He said the four-year project helped solve the mystery because the focus was based on forensic evidence. The information used was also heavily based on comparison proof from the top scientists in the world.

"The evidence stands on its own, you prove the evidence wrong," he said, adding that the bones would be made available for examination to any scientist who wanted to examine the remains. "... We've put thousands of hours in this. We just want to give this to the world and the scientific community free of charge to add to the scientific body of knowledge."

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Posted in News on *Wednesday, May 27, 2015 12:00 am.*

6 comments:

• **asuato posted at 9:57 pm on Sat, Apr 2, 2016.**

Posts: 1

Couldn't be more close minded Ron. Do you realize there are new species of primates discovered fairly frequently? Just because we haven't "found" it yet doesn't mean it does not exist. Do the research. None of your arguments hold water. Skeletons of any animal are gone pretty quick in the areas of the most frequent bigfoot sightings, ie the Pacific Northwest, due to scavengers and rapid decay. Have you read the book? I have. Have you ever come across a bear or cougar skeleton in the wild? Maybe a few have but its very rare. Am I 100% convinced myself? No. But there are too many eyewitness reports from credible people. They are seeing something out there. What it is I don't know. The possibility of a bipedal animal roaming the USA does indeed exist. I said "possibility", not "probability". I will remain open minded on the subject.

• **Ron posted at 6:47 pm on Fri, Apr 1, 2016.**

Posts: 1

There is no such thing as bigfoot never has been never will be ! There is no evidence because there has never been a found skeleton at any time in the written history of man !! This so called Dr. from Idaho State U is writing a book on the subject and their is no better way to sell a good story , because you never want the truth to get in the way of that !! And if you believe this BS you should come on out to my unicorn ranch we are just a scant 53 miles west of Venus !!!

• **Ranger Joe posted at 11:44 pm on Wed, Mar 30, 2016.**

Posts: 1

Would a primate and a human be genetically compatible? Is there some sort of romantic saga from the Pleistocene Age at play here?

• **carolsally posted at 4:12 am on Wed, Mar 16, 2016.**

Posts: 1

Teachers also give besttermseducation and it also gives self-reliance and it also increases the confidence level and it give proper end result and perfect pondering.

- **Dave Norris posted at 12:27 pm on Fri, May 29, 2015.**

Posts: 40

It is a bit premature to add another primate to the shaggy bush of life, but PRAISE HALLELUIAH one of my neighbors understands that extraordinary claims require solid evidence.

- **Patty Gimlin posted at 2:40 am on Thu, May 28, 2015.**

Posts: 1

*It is Dr Jeff Meldrum (Don Jeffrey Meldrum) of Idaho State University (Department of Biological Sciences).

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Quantum computing: Game changer or security threat? - BBC News

bbc.com

**Quantum computing: Game changer or security threat?**

By Zoe Thomas Technology of Business reporter

♦ 5 April 2016

*In quantum computing, a qubit can be one, zero, or one and zero at the same time*

Getty Images

Superfast quantum computers could transform the world of finance, advocates say.

In a world where how fast you can assimilate and analyse data, then act on it, makes the difference between profit and loss, computing speed is key.

This is why banks, insurance firms and hedge funds invest millions on technology to give them an edge when trading and to offset human error.

Quantum computers, that owe more to quantum mechanics than electronics, promise to be exponentially more powerful than traditional computers, holding out the tantalising prospect of near-perfect trading strategies and highly accurate forecasting and risk assessments.

"Financial services is a data-rich environment," says Kevin Hanley, director of design at the Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS). "Time is money and the ability to process data fast could have a huge potential benefit for our customers."

Quantum computing in a nutshell

Classical computing relies on binary digits or bits - ones and zeros representing on/off, true/false states.

Quantum computing, on the other hand, features qubits, which can be both 0 or 1 at the same time - a state known as superposition. It all goes back to Schrodinger's cat, but that's another story....

Subatomic particles such as electrons, photons or ions can be made to behave in this mysterious way.

And because of this flexibility, qubits can do a lot more - a quantum computer could theoretically carry out trillions of calculations per second.

But these computers aren't easy to build or operate. Quantum processors from one of the leading manufacturers in this field - D-Wave - need to be cooled to just above absolute zero (-273.15C). They also need to be free from any electromagnetic interference.

This makes them bulky and costly; D-Wave's computers cost about \$10m-15m.

Ironically they're also a bit limited in the kinds of calculations they can currently do, and many observers are still sceptical about how fast they really are.

So it's fair to say we're still at the very early stages of quantum computing.

Goldman Sachs, RBS, Guggenheim Partners and Commonwealth Bank of Australia have all invested in quantum computing, with the aim of stealing a march on their competitors.

"This is interesting to the financial world because if you can find an algorithmic advantage to solve a problem, that can give you a great competitive advantage," says Colin Williams, director of business development for D-Wave.



D-Wave CEO Vern Brownell says two more generations of its quantum processor will be released over the next five years

Image copyright D-Wave Systems
Image caption

Google, Nasa, Lockheed Martin, the US Department of Energy and the University of Southern California have all used D-Wave's systems so far.

Other tech companies, such as Cambridge Quantum Computing, QxBranch and Rigetti, are also rushing to develop the hardware and software needed to make quantum computing a reality.

Longer-term visibility

Quantum computers could solve problems in a day that would take classical computers thousands of years to solve.

So in the world of investment, they could consider millions of different global investment scenarios and calculate which ones have the best chance of success over the long-term.

"We can build an optimal portfolio today, but tomorrow it won't be optimal and needs to be rebalanced, which is expensive," says Marcos Lopez de Prado, a senior managing director at Guggenheim Partners.



Humans and computers are constantly monitoring the markets and tweaking portfolios
computer, it's in the cost saving," says Mr Williams.

Image copyright Getty Images
Image caption

Quantum computers could, in theory, give investment firms much better visibility over the longer-term to make more accurate predictions and reduce this need to tinker with their portfolios, saving costs and possibly boosting profits.

"If you can predict the US dollar/Swiss franc exchange rate a tenth of a cent more reliably, then the value isn't in the

Better forecasting could also reduce the prevalence of high-frequency trading, which has been accused of creating market volatility.

High-frequency traders have also been blamed for raising the costs of trading for ordinary investors by swooping into purchases nanoseconds before an interested party and reselling the stocks at a higher price.

Not so fast

So how soon will quantum computers be readily available?

D-Wave's Mr Williams reckons businesses will have access to quantum computing functionality by 2018, whereas RBS's Mr Hanley thinks it will be "five to 10 years before quantum computing comes of age".

But this isn't stopping financial institutions getting excited.

Blu Putnam, chief economist for the CME group - a US-based derivatives market - says quantum computing has led to a "mind-set change" where financial services "now seek out the nearly impossible to solve problems" in asset and risk management.



D-Wave's quantum computer is big and expensive

Image copyright D-Wave Systems

Image caption

Before then, there is a lot of preparation to do.

Quantum computers can't be interrogated in the same way as traditional computers. The algorithms - sets of complex mathematical rules - used for classical computing need to be reworked to fit into the quantum system.

And finding and training computer scientists to understand and use these systems effectively is another big challenge for the financial services industry.

But Mr Hanley says: "Rather than observe these changes from a distance or be last in the queue, I'd rather be at the front and have a seat at the board."

Cracking the code

Quantum computing may offer potential benefits to the financial services industry, but it also poses risks.

Banks rely on encryption to keep their transactions and customer data secure. This involves scrambling and unscrambling data using keys made of very large numbers - tens, if not hundreds, of digits long.

A hacker would have to find the right key by trial and error and test it in order to unlock the data - a process that could take hundreds of years even with the most powerful of today's supercomputers.



Could quantum computers unlock the world's encryption systems?

Image copyright Thinkstock
Image caption

But quantum computers could crack the code with relative ease, potentially undermining the security of the entire global financial services industry.

Such a possibility leads Mr Lopez de Prado to fear that governments might outlaw quantum computers entirely.

"Governments could say they should be banned because otherwise there would be no

secrets, but they can't be un-invented.

"We need a new mathematical breakthrough that creates an unbreakable encryption," he says.

Cryptographers are busy working on new algorithms to block attacks from future quantum computers and many believe this will be possible.

But the industry needs this breakthrough fast. The processing power of quantum computing is growing with each generation.

Follow Technology of Business editor @matthew_wall on Twitter.

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Rare 5,000-year-old kurgan-type tumulus from the Bronze Age unearthed in Istanbul

dailysabah.com

<http://www.dailysabah.com/istanbul/2016/05/16/rare-5000-year-old-kurgan-type-tumulus-from-the-bronze-age-unearthed-in-istanbul>

DAILY SABAH NURBANU KIZIL
ISTANBUL

Published 16 hours ago



Rare 5,000-year-old kurgan-type tumulus from the Bronze Age unearthed in Istanbul

Istanbul Archeology Museum has announced on Monday that they have made the largest archeological discovery of the year by unearthing 'the first and oldest 5,000-year-old tumulus in the country' in the Istanbul's Silivri district, expected to shed light on the history of Istanbul and Thrace.

According to reports, archeologists have found the 5,000-year-old kurgan-type tumulus, which is considered as the first completely excavated tumulus of its kind during a rescue excavation, which started in December 2015 at a summer residence complex in Silivri's Çanta region.

A report submitted in April by the Istanbul Board no. 1 to Protect Cultural Properties has stated that the tumulus belongs to a prominent Bronze-Age soldier or fighter coming from the north, as he was buried with a spearhead.

Moreover, it was stated that treasure hunters had previously dug the tumulus several times before, but were unable to reach the main burial chamber.

Professor Mehmet Özdoğan from Istanbul University's Archeology Department has reportedly said that he has previously studied kurgan-type of graves in the past and such graves had been destroyed in the past. However, he noted that this discovery is a prominent one as it is the oldest of its kind found in Thrace and will shed light on a number of historical questions, after scientific research.

Özdoğan had discovered a kurgan tumulus dating back to 1200 BCE in 1980 during surface explorations in Kırklareli province's Asilbeyli village, located in Eastern Thrace.

Istanbul Archeology Museum has reportedly requested for the area where the grave was found to be officially registered, and for the remains of the grave to be moved to the museum

where they can be displayed.

The fate of the tumulus will be decided in line with a decision by the preservation board.

A kurgan is a type of tumulus that is widely found in Eastern European and Central Asian archeology. It is considered as a 'sacred burial' in Turkic and Altaic cultures. The word is originally borrowed from an unidentified Turkic language and means 'fortress' in Turkish.

Kurgans date back to the Copper, Bronze, Iron, Antiquity and Middle Ages and are believed to have affected the culture of neighboring peoples without such burial practices.

Philip II of Macedon, who was the father of Alexander the Great is one of the prominent historical figures buried in a kurgan located in Greece.

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Man Files Restraining Order Against God

huffingtonpost.com

HUFFPOST WEIRD NEWS

Israeli Man Files Restraining Order Against God**The plaintiff just wants God to stop interfering in his life.**

05/05/2016 04:01 pm ET



Getty Images/Huffington Post Illustration

A man in Israel apparently doesn't want God to answer his prayers, so he's filed a restraining order against the Almighty.

The plaintiff, identified as David Shoshan, appeared in a courtroom in Haifa on Tuesday demanding that God stop interfering in his life, according to NRG, an Israeli news website.

Shoshan told the court that over the last three years, God had been very negative towards him, though court documents didn't detail any specifics,

the Times of Israel noted.

Shoshan said he has tried numerous times to obtain the restraining order through the police department, but in response, only received 10 police visits over a 36-month period. That's why this time, he tried to go through the court instead.

Court documents noted that God did not present himself at the hearing.

The presiding judge, Ahsan Canaan, threw out Shoshan's request and called it absurd.

Canaan suggested Shoshan should get help from someone besides local law enforcement, according to NRG.

It was not immediately clear if God has an attorney.

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How a Ragtag Gang of Retirees Pulled Off the Biggest Jewel Heist in British History

Mark Seal

2016-03-16T08:00:00Z

vanityfair.com



GOLDEN YEARS

Brian Reader, Daniel Jones, Hugh Doyle, John “Kenny” Collins, Terry Perkins, Carl Wood, and William Lincoln after their May 2015 arrests, in London.

Photo-Illustration by Sean McCabe; By Carl Court/Hatton Garden Properties Ltd./Getty Images (Background), from Metropolitan Police Service/AFP (Doyle, Lincoln, Wood), from Metropolitan Police/PA Wire/A.P. Images (All others).

The police and public gasped at the audacity of the Great Hatton Garden heist

of 2015, where millions in cash and jewels were taken from an underground vault in London’s diamond district. Mark Seal investigates the unorthodox daring of the perpetrators—and the high-tech investigation that snared them.

Prologue

‘It required a team with diverse skills.... It took ingenuity and brute force,’ reporter Declan Lawn speculated on BBC television three weeks after what was already being called “the greatest heist in British history,” the audacious April 2015 ransacking of safe-deposit boxes in Hatton Garden, London’s diamond district. The crime was indeed epic. So much cash, jewelry, and other valuables had been taken that the loot, worth up to \$300 million according to estimates at the time, had been hauled out of the vault in giant trash containers on wheels. Lawn demonstrated the acrobatic feats the gang must have used, and London’s newspapers were filled with artists’ renderings of the heist, featuring hard-bodied burglars in black turtlenecks doing superhuman things. Experts insisted that the heist was the work of a foreign team of navy-SEAL-like professionals, likely from the infamous Pink Panthers, a Serbian gang of master diamond thieves. Retired Scotland Yard detective Barry Phillips believed it was the work of a highly technical team, assembled by a so-called “Draftsman”—who financed the heist and assembled the players, probably from the U.K. He speculated that no member of the gang would have known any of the others, in order to preserve “sterile corridors,” making it impossible for any perpetrator to rat out the others.

The thieves had surely divided up the spoils into easily transportable lots once inside “the slaughter,” as their hideaway would have been called in London gangster argot. Perhaps they had sneaked the jewels out of the country by stuffing them up the butts of racehorses, the flamboyant villain turned celebrity Dave Courtney theorized on the BBC. The thieves would have been whisked out of Great Britain on a quick ferry trip from Dover to Dunkirk or Calais, from where they could disappear into Europe.

they were now two burglars short, they were able to ransack only 73 of the 996 boxes, but it was enough, a vast array of loose diamonds and other stones, jewelry, and cash—stacks of it! There was also gold and platinum bullion.

The burglars felt they were stealing from the rich, including the Hatton Garden jewelers who, Perkins later said, had ripped off his daughter by using a fake stone in her engagement ring. “They deserve all they get, Dad,” his daughter reportedly told him. “They are all riffraff down there,” Jones told Perkins.

“I’ll tell you what he lost, shall I?” said Jones, counting the proceeds from one box alone. “[£2.3] million worth of gold he lost, plus [£102,000] in notes.”

“I feel a bit sorry, don’t you?” asked Perkins.

“Give it back to him,” said Jones, laughing.

Around 5:45 A.M. on Easter Sunday, April 5, after they worked through the night, the job was done: the empty metal carcasses of the boxes were strewn across the floor, along with the drill and broken jack, but no DNA evidence, thanks to the thieves’ careful study of *Forensics for Dummies*. Jones came up the stairs from the vault to the fire escape with the pump ram, with Perkins following soon after, and they both hauled up a wheelie bin so heavy Perkins had to stop at the top of the stairs, visibly gasping.

Collins drove them away in his Mercedes, dropping the burglars off at their various homes. Within 36 hours, the loot was divided up among them.

‘I think we’ve been burgled,’ Kelvin Stockwell recalled being told by his associate guard on Tuesday morning, when he arrived at work.

“I went downstairs, and I saw the top lock of the door was missing,” Stockwell told me. He peered through the hole where the lock should have been and saw “drills, cutting tools, pipes—chaos,” he said. “I called the police. Fifteen, 20 minutes [later] they turned up. They looked through the door. We went inside. It was like a bomb had hit the place.”

Along with the police came the boxholders, and by 10 A.M. the street in front of the vault was filled with misery. “I was sitting at home enjoying an afternoon cup of coffee, a piece of Passover cake, when I heard my children speaking of a big robbery,” said a diamond dealer, who claimed he had more than \$720,000 worth of diamonds in his box. “I didn’t take notice, because there are robberies all of the time. Then, after a half-hour, one of my children said, ‘It’s the Hatton Garden Safe Deposit.’

“I heard that, and I’ve never felt anything like it,” he continued. “If you had said to me, ‘Jump out of a 20-story building onto a mattress in the street,’ that’s what you feel. Everything you worked for ... gone!”

He joined the fray on the street, where emotional dealers were barred from entering the building. The media soon arrived, along with insurance adjusters. Then came the excruciating wait—three, four, and, in some cases, five or more days—as the police sorted through the

rubble. The calls from police to the victims began on Thursday.

Give us a list of what's in your box.

It was a seemingly simple request of the police to the victims. But some couldn't say with certainty, and others wouldn't say. Did their boxes contain contraband, possibly stolen goods and cash that hadn't been declared to the British tax authority, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs?

"That is why we will never know how much was actually stolen—because safety-deposit boxes are used for a number of reasons, and one of them is anonymity," said former senior detective Barry Phillips.

As the heist dominated the British media, and the CCTV video of the masked marauders leaked to the *Mirror* newspaper and was aired on television and Web sites, the public seemed to be rooting for the daring, dexterous, still-at-large diamond thieves, while blaming the victims and the police, who had failed to respond to the burglar alarm.

For six weeks after the heist, the burglars sat in the suburbs of London, reveling in their rewards and reliving their crime. Old age and infirmities be damned—they were full-on thieves again, back in their old haunts, the cafés and the Castle pub, where they had spent three years researching and planning the heist, full of beer, fish-and-chips, and bravado. They had a source in Scotland Yard, Jones told Perkins, and the Yard was "fucked."

"Ain't you caught them yet, the big heist?" Jones said, quoting what his source had asked a detective, and the cop answered no. That was because the chumps thought it was an inside job, Perkins said, that the Sudanese owners of the vault had ripped off their own business. "If they think it's an inside job, they will not put 100 percent into it," Perkins told Jones. "They'll think, You mugging us off, you cunts. You want us running all around London when it's fucking from inside."

"No comment," Perkins said of what he planned to say in the unlikely event the police ever bumbled into arresting him for the job. "I'll say, 'What? You dopey cunt, I can't even fucking walk.'"

The New "Sweeney"

The Flying Squad, the elite investigative unit within London's Metropolitan Police department, was formed in 1919 and named for its ability to "fly" across London without regard to districts. Its detectives call themselves "thief takers." Once renowned for their contacts within London's criminal underworld, they have solved some of the biggest and most famous cases in Britain.

I met the two lead detectives in the Hatton Garden case in a conference room in the multi-story New Scotland Yard building, in central London: Paul Johnson, 54, a tall, chiseled Clint Eastwood type, and his bright and intense deputy, Jamie Day, 43. Both wore business suits and ties bearing the squad's descending-eagle logo. But beneath their affable, professional demeanor they undoubtedly embody the Scotland Yard legacy of being implacable when it

comes to getting their man.

"I'm senior investigating officer, so I sort of direct it and manage, and Jamie and the team does all the work," said Johnson, whose 31 years on the force have involved many "high-risk things like armed robberies, dynamic crimes in action like that."

"I'm the case officer," explained Day, 20 years a London cop, 7 on the Flying Squad. He was the first detective through the vault's door on the morning after the burglary.

The team on the Hatton Garden heist consisted of most of the 50 or so officers in the western unit of the two-unit Flying Squad. "[The Hatton Garden case] is not usually what the Flying Squad would take, per se," said Johnson, because no one was physically injured and none of the perpetrators appeared to have carried guns. "But obviously there was the magnitude of it and the detail that the gang had gone to to get themselves in. Clearly, we'd have to take it."

The two detectives seemed a far cry from the fabled 1960s and 1970s Flying Squad sleuths known as "the Sweeney" and depicted in books, movies, and on television. (The expression is Cockney rhyming slang derived from the name of the murderous barber of Fleet Street, "Sweeney Todd.") Back then they were rough-hewn Sherlocks in fast cars and shady bars. "Oh, the Sweeney?" said Paul Johnson of the old era. "It has moved on. It has to move on. We haven't got a Granada or Cortina [the cars in which the old squad would chase their prey]. But it's the same commitment to getting results. You've got this legacy over the years: Brinks-Mat, Millennium Dome, Graff, the Great Train Robbery [all among England's biggest, most infamous heists] from years ago. You want to make sure you perpetuate that legacy.... There's a pride. We all like to wear our ties with the eagle." He lifted his and showed it off to me, the screaming eagle landing on its victims.

The Hatton Garden investigative teams were overseen by Peter Spindler, who, like the thieves, was approaching retirement. Working around the clock on the streets and in a field office in Putney, in southwest London, officers and detectives deciphered more than 350 pieces of evidence. Most important, Spindler said, they "trawled" through days of CCTV footage collected from the 120-plus cameras in and around Hatton Garden. The evidence was producing results, but "you want to keep all the cards close to your chest," said Johnson, who was under extreme pressure from the media to solve the case.

Early on in the investigation, a young member of the CCTV team spotted the Flying Squad's first big break: a white Mercedes E200 with a black roof and alloy rims. It had passed through Hatton Garden multiple times prior to the Easter/Passover weekend.

"All the imagery is quite murky," said Johnson. "The CCTV team had to get all the angles on it.... So it was piecing together the jigsaw of all the different [camera] angles you can get." The Mercedes, they would quickly learn, belonged to an ex-con: Kenny Collins. "When they went down initially they had the white van.... That was a car that they bought months ago and wasn't attributable to anybody," said Johnson. "So they could quite safely drive down there, drive away in that on the first night, because it's never going to raise any suspicion. If anybody checked on that van, it wouldn't mean anything to anybody. On the second time they come down, what they don't know is 'Has that van been seen? Has the burglary been

discovered? Has there been a report on that [van]?' So they couldn't come down in that van."

But using the easily traceable Mercedes instead was a major screwup. Through automatic license-plate recognition the police traced it to John Collins's home and tracked the car's movements from there to the store in Twickenham where Danny Jones bought the replacement hydraulic pump.

Just as foolhardy, the burglars, while using walkie-talkies during the actual heist, used their own cell phones before and after the burglary. "Researching cell phones and call-data analysis, we started building a picture," recalled Spindler. Then they set about connecting the digital dots—cars, cell phones, CCTV footage—and it was more than enough to get special approval for Scotland Yard's Specialist Crime & Operations 11 Surveillance Command team to plant listening devices (which are reserved in the U.K. for only the highest-level organized-crime and terrorism cases) in Kenny Collins's Mercedes and in Terry Perkins's Citroën Saxo. Still, it wasn't enough to arrest.

"They can meet people all day long," explained Johnson, but meetings alone mean little.

So they began to bug their cars. How? "Surveillance pixies," Johnson said, laughing. "Surveillance teams," explains Day. "They follow people around on and off for about seven or eight weeks without being compromised, and that's not an easy thing to do."

The thieves were trailed by detectives, observed by lip-readers, bugged for many days and nights in their cars, and videotaped in their favorite bars, and the Flying Squad was astounded by what they heard. Three of the thieves—Perkins, Jones, and Collins—were recorded bragging about how they did the heist, what they stole, how they were going to dispose of the goods. "The biggest robbery in the fucking world ... we was on," said Terry Perkins in just one of many endlessly incriminating statements.

Brian Reader was snared by the surveillance detectives one evening in May, a month after the heist, when the Flying Squad dispatched an operative with a hidden video camera to the Castle pub, where Reader sat drinking with Perkins and Collins. In the middle of the pub, Perkins pantomimed for Reader the moment that Danny Jones and his 10-ton hydraulic pump knocked over the massive wall of safe-deposit boxes to allow them entry into the vault. "Boom!" Perkins exclaimed, according to a lip-reader, who deciphered the conversation.

According to Johnson, Jamie Day "spent hours and hours" transcribing recordings and unraveling the East London dialect and slang. A lawyer at the trial compared the work of deciphering their conversations to the work done by Shakespearean scholars.

Damning as the recordings were, it *still* wasn't enough to arrest.

"It obviously is good," said Paul Johnson. "But you have to say to yourself, 'What would happen if we lost this [evidence]? We've still got to have a case without it.' You've still got to work your way through everything else and make sure you've got enough to corroborate what they're saying. If you don't, they would have an option of saying that 'we're just a bunch of elderly fantasists who were talking a lot of old nonsense in the car.' So we've got to prove that

that's not the case."

They had to catch them with the goods.

Once the heat died down, the thieves planned to sell their haul for cash, provide for family members, and fund their pensions. But by this time people were talking and other villains seemed to know about the heist. Danny Jones, who had hidden some of his share beneath family graves in a cemetery, exited his house one morning at four A.M. to find waiting for him a villain, who then asked him questions about the deal. It was imperative that they consolidate everything and sell it off fast.

Their mistake was letting the increasingly careless Kenny Collins handle the logistics. The day after the burglary, Collins hid some of his loot in casserole dishes in his kitchen cupboard, but gave most of it for safekeeping to "Billy the Fish" Lincoln, the brother of Collins's longtime girlfriend. "I said to Brian [Reader], I said, 'ere, how does this fucking Bill know about anything?" recalled Perkins. "Bill, [Reader] said. [Who's] Bill? I said, the fucking geezer round Kenny's.... I went upstairs to have a shower, right, and when I came down there was a bloke there who I never knew, which was Bill, and Kenny had told him everything. I said, 'cos Bill has wound up with the fucking gear."

At 60, Bill Lincoln was nobody's idea of the ideal bagman. He suffered from incontinence, sleep apnea, and a recent double hip replacement. He lived in Bethnal Green, in East London, a breeding ground for wanton criminals and once the home turf of the infamous gangsters the Kray twins. Lincoln had convictions for attempted theft, burglary, and battery. He duped his nephew Jon Harbinson, 43, a London taxi driver (who was eventually acquitted of having any part in the crimes), into transporting the goods from his house to a handover point. *Because who would suspect that the proceeds from the great diamond heist would be carried in a London taxicab?* Even more reckless was Collins's choice of the handover point: a public parking lot in the borough of Enfield, under CCTV surveillance, beside the workshop of plumber Hugh Doyle, who would be charged and convicted as an accessory, despite testifying, "I had no knowledge of what was taking place. It was a public car park covered by CCTV. No way in a million years was this a good place to do something this stupid."

No, it wasn't, but, yes, they did. At 9:44 A.M. on Tuesday, May 19, in full view of the CCTV camera and with the Flying Squad monitoring their every move, the burglars transferred three canvas holdalls filled with jewels from the taxi to Collins's Mercedes. The police already knew the location of the "slaughter" because Perkins and Jones had previously revealed the address in conversations recorded in their car.

The Flying Squad was ready to descend. "I was sitting in my office with our lawyer and our press officers and staff officer, getting text-message updates, and it was very gripping," said Commander Peter Spindler, of the moment when the burglars and their valuables entered a house belonging to Terry Perkins's daughter, on Sterling Road, in Enfield.

At that same moment, just after 10 A.M. on May 19, almost six weeks after the heist, the Flying Squad stormed 12 addresses, surrounding them front, back, and sides, and hitting them all simultaneously so no one could escape. From Enfield to Bethnal Green to the suburb

of Dartford, more than 200 officers, some in riot gear, battered through doors and dragged out the suspected burglars and their accomplices. Lincoln was stopped in his car; later at the police station he wet his pants. Reader was escorted from his old mansion “a little unsteady on his legs and clutching his heart,” said a neighbor.

On Sterling Road, Terry Perkins, Danny Jones, and Kenny Collins were at the dining-room table, on which a smelter had been set up to melt between \$2.9 million and \$4.4 million worth of precious metals that lay in holdalls, when officers burst through the front door wearing riot helmets and flame-proof overalls, and carrying what’s called a “commissioner’s key,” a battering ram.

“Collins and Perkins were placed onto the sofa, while Jones tried to run out the back door, but only made it a few yards into the garden,” recalled Jamie Day.

Even then the thieves thought they could outsmart Scotland Yard. Once in custody, they pretended they didn’t know one another. “They’re old, experienced criminals, obviously, so the drill if you’re an older criminal is not to say anything, keep your mouth shut, and just see what opportunities there are to get out of it,” said Johnson.

But then each of the primary suspects was played segments of the audio recordings, in which he admitted a great deal and incriminated the others. Upon hearing evidence against him, Kenny Collins didn’t even ask for bail. “Collins said, ‘I’d rather have a cup of tea,’ ” recalled Johnson. “He knew he was never going to get bail.”

“When you listen to them discussing it, I think, they’re quite comfortable in the fact that they’re in their older years, white-haired old men—nobody’s going to look at them,” said Jamie Day. *We’re driving around in a little car here, two old boys. Who is going to stop us? The police aren’t looking for us. They’re looking for the fit, able people who have committed this.*

“Tom Cruise abseiling down a lift shaft,” added Johnson.

But, presented with the recordings, the CCTV footage, and other digital evidence, Reader, Perkins, Jones, and Collins felt they had no choice but to plead guilty. The others charged in the heist—Carl Wood, Hugh Doyle, and William Lincoln—were found guilty at trial in January. As of this writing, the seven were set to be sentenced on March 7. Hatton Garden Safe Deposit, Ltd., went into liquidation in September, unable to recover from its damaged reputation.

As for the mysterious Basil, he is still at large, along with two-thirds of the haul, worth more than \$15 million.

The thieves were able to steal the CCTV cameras inside the actual building and its basement vault. “What they forgot, or didn’t know,” said the prosecutor, “was that one little camera in that walkway outside the back of [one jeweler] was still working and recording what they were doing.” Said Peter Spindler, “They were analog criminals operating in a digital world, and no match for digital detectives.”

Mark Seal joined *Vanity Fair* as a contributing editor in 2003.

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British crime aficionados saw the operation as a refreshing throwback to the meticulously planned, supremely executed jewelry heists of yesteryear, the ones that had inspired such classic crime movies as *To Catch a Thief* and *Topkapi*. Many were calling it “the perfect crime.”

But when arrests were made a month later, Great Britain collectively gasped.

The Villains

Retirement is a bitch.

Your wife has passed away. Most of your mates are in exile, prison, or the grave. Even the cops you once eluded have died, retired, or forgotten you. You skulk around your run-down mansion in the suburbs of London, puttering in your garden, infuriating your neighbors by running a used-car dealership out of your home, and “hobbling over to the news agent,” as one neighbor put it, for the daily papers to read about younger men doing what you used to.

This was the life of Brian Reader at 76. “He ain’t got no friends no more,” a colleague would say of him. “Sitting down there in the café, talks about all their yesterdays,” said another. “He was a thief 40 years ago.”

The Guardian’s veteran crime reporter Duncan Campbell, who met Reader 30 years ago, described him as something of a gent, “an easy-going character, the antithesis of a criminal wide boy, still in touch with his old school friends.”

And yet for practically his whole life Reader had exasperated Scotland Yard. First arrested for breaking and entering at age 11, he became associated with the infamous Tommy Adams crime family. He was also allegedly part of the “Millionaire Moles” gang, which burrowed under a leather-goods shop and restaurant to loot 268 safe-deposit boxes in a Lloyds bank vault in London in 1971. “Let Sherlock Holmes try to solve this,” the gang reportedly wrote on the vault’s wall before escaping with cash and jewels, worth more than \$59 million today, and, allegedly, some pretty interesting photographs of Princess Margaret and actor Richard Harris. Reader, in those days, evaded police and went skiing in Méribel or yachting on the “Costa del Crime,” in Spain, so called because many British villains, as criminals are called in the U.K., found a safe haven there.

Reader had generally managed to “walk” away until the Brinks-Mat Job, named for the high-security warehouse at Heathrow Airport hit by a group of bandits on November 26, 1983. Aiming to steal at most \$4.4 million in cash, they instead stumbled on what today would be worth \$145 million in gold bullion. Reader was merely a “soldier” on that job, moving the gold between a “fence” named Kenny Noye, who was supposed to arrange for it to be melted down, and dealers in Hatton Garden. But Reader had the bad luck to be present on the night Noye stabbed a police detective 11 times, after which Reader allegedly kicked the body. Although Reader and Noye were acquitted of murder (arguing self-defense), they were both later found guilty of conspiracy for handling stolen goods; for his part, Reader was sentenced to nine years.

Reader got out of prison in 1994, and it seemed he had put the life of crime behind him. But two decades later, suffering from prostate cancer and other ailments, he decided to get back into the game with his biggest caper yet. He studied books, such as *The Diamond Underworld*, and read diamond-industry magazines. He had diamond testers, scales, gauges, and other paraphernalia, all with an eye toward “one last hurrah,” Scotland Yard commander Peter Spindler, who oversaw the London police in investigating the heist, told me. “Someone for drilling, someone for electrics, someone as a lookout—all experienced villains who knew what they were doing.” He added that Reader was called “the Gov’nor,” the leader in British gangster parlance, who, possibly with associates, “set it up, enlisted the others, and called the job on, to the best of our understanding.”

Number two on the heist was Terry Perkins, 67, suffering from diabetes and other health issues, living out his sunset years in an anonymous little house in Enfield. He was a ghost to the neighbors, who had no idea he had once been a ringleader in the largest cash robbery in British history at that time: the 1983 Security Express Job, in which a gang raided a cash depot in East London for \$9 million. Perkins was sentenced to 22 years but escaped from Spring Hill prison and went on the lam for 17 years, returning briefly in 2012, to serve out the last of his sentence. Because he and another robber had threatened a bank employee by dousing him with gasoline, then shaking a box of matches in his face, the judge had called Perkins an evil, ruthless man.

But others paint a different picture. He wasn’t a known criminal before the Security Express robbery, said retired detective Peter Wilton. “Usually wore a suit and had a portfolio of houses. The day of the 1983 robbery was his birthday, and his wife was surprised [he left] because he usually waited for his children to give him his presents.” Instead, Perkins left to become a habitual villain who kept “busy in the heavyweight division of commercial burglary,” a defense lawyer would argue, who added that Perkins commanded “subservience” from Danny Jones.

Jones, 60, viewed “his profession as a commercial burglar with some enthusiasm,” said the lawyer. Extraordinarily fit, with tremendous stamina, he was, according to a friend, a “Walter Mitty” type, who read palms and ran marathons when he wasn’t serving more than 20 years in prison. His passions were for the army and crime, and his rap sheet was filled with convictions. He lived in what was called an “opulent” house, where police later found magnification loupes, masks, a walkie-talkie, and the book *Forensics for Dummies*. “Eccentric to [such] extremes that everyone who knew Danny would say he was mad,” said Carl Wood, another member of the Hatton Garden team. “He would go to bed in his mother’s dressing gown with a fez on.” He would sleep in a sleeping bag in his bedroom on the floor, urinate into a bottle, and speak to his terrier, Rocket, as if the dog were human. At five P.M. most days Jones would lock himself away, to “study crime all the time ... read books, watch films, and go on the Internet,” said Wood. For three years, Jones studied the price of gold and diamonds and searched online to learn about diamond-toothed core drills.

A police officer outside the Hatton Garden Safe Deposit building after the burglary.

© Andy Rain/EPA/Corbis.



Carl Wood, 58, was sentenced to four years in prison in 2002, after being trapped in a police sting in a bugged Surrey hotel room. Wood and his accomplices, who included two corrupt London police detectives, were recorded planning to torture a money-launderer and put his body in a car crusher if he didn't hand over the \$850,000 he owed them. "I'll just go smash, hit him straight in the head," Wood was recorded saying as to what he planned to do when the man entered the room. Having no trade,

and listing his employment as "retired," Wood would testify he dabbled in "a bit of painting and decorating," and described himself as "just a general dogsbody." More than \$12,000 in debt at the time of the Hatton Garden heist, he claimed to have been living on disability payments after being diagnosed with Crohn's disease, an inflammation of the digestive tract. His genial appearance—V-necked sweater, distinguished beard, eyeglasses on a string—belied his criminal nature. He may have been selected for the Hatton Garden Job for his slim physique, which enabled him to crawl into tight spaces.

Driver and lookout man John "Kenny" Collins, 75, was a classic London villain—a "dodgy" but elegant figure in the streets of London with his beloved Staffordshire bull terrier, Dempsey, nipping at his heels. His legitimate business was high-volume fireworks importation. In fact, he was a walking pawnshop. "He'd buy cars, expensive watches ... and sell it back to you later," said a friend. His rap sheet, stretching back to 1961, included convictions for robbery, burglary, handling stolen goods, and conspiracy to defraud. Diabetes had exiled him into semi-retirement, and he was reportedly growing deafer and more forgetful by the day.

Two peripheral members of the team were Hugh Doyle, 48, a plumber who grew up in Ireland and who was a reader of *The Guardian* and, he told me, a devoted fan of the late *Vanity Fair* columnist Christopher Hitchens; and William Lincoln, 60, who was incontinent. They stored and helped move the stolen treasure.

One member of the team still at large and not yet identified is Basil, as he was called by the other thieves and the police. He was the inside man, who knew the building, disarmed the alarms, and let the others in. There is a \$29,000 reward for a tip that leads to his arrest. (Danny Jones has claimed that Basil was an ex-policeman and "the brains" of the operation, but police are dubious.)

The Hatton Garden heist, it turned out, had been the work of this ragtag group of superannuated criminals representing the last of "traditional British villainy," in the words of the police commander, Spindler. Most were in their 60s and 70s—more Lavender Hill Mob than James Bond. "Run? Ah, they can barely walk," Danny Jones wrote to Sky News reporter Martin Brunt from jail. "One has cancer—he's 76. Another, heart condition, 68. Another, 75, can't remember his name. Sixty-year-old with two new hips and knees. Crohn's disease. I

won't go on. It's a joke."

Yet they had defied age, physical infirmities, burglar alarms, and even Scotland Yard to power their way through walls of concrete and solid steel and haul away a prize now estimated at more than \$20 million—at least \$15 million of which is still missing.

The Job

The vault, belonging to the Hatton Garden Safe Deposit Ltd. (H.G.S.D.), was located at 88–90 Hatton Garden, London. The building is seven stories tall and has around 60 tenants, most of them jewelers. The wooden main door to the building is unlocked between nine A.M. and six P.M., and all the tenants have their own keys for other times. Just behind the main door is a glass door, left unlocked during the day and opened at other times with a four-digit PIN code, which all the tenants know. This leads to an unstaffed lobby. In the 1970s the elevator in the lobby was disabled so it couldn't descend lower than the ground floor, after a robber with a shotgun rode it down to the basement, where the vault is located. Beside the elevator is a door that leads to a flight of stairs to the basement. This door is also unlocked during business hours; during other times it is locked and only a few people, including the two H.G.S.D. security guards and one member of the cleaning staff, have keys. At the bottom of the stairs, to the left, is another wooden door, with a mortise deadlock. This door is also left open during working hours. At other times it is locked, and only two security guards and H.G.S.D. co-owner and manager Manish Bavishi have keys. Once inside the door, you have 60 seconds to deactivate the intruder alarm with a five-digit code on the alarm box. Directly behind the wooden door is a sliding iron gate, which forms an air lock with a second sliding gate. These are manned by a security guard. To enter the first door you need a four-digit security code for the PIN box; the security guard opens the second gate to let you out the other side. "Significantly," as the prosecutor put it, inside the air lock there are locked shutters, behind which are the doors, no longer used, to the elevator shaft. These shutters are opened only if the shaft is being cleaned or a tenant has dropped his keys or something similar down the shaft.

Astonishingly, there is a much easier way to get to the vault area: a fire exit on Greville Street, from which iron stairs go down to a courtyard adjoining 88–90's basement. Only two businesses have a key to the outside lock on the street-level fire exit: jeweler Lionel Wiffen, whose back office can be accessed from the courtyard, and Hirschfelds antique jewelers, located in 88–90. From the inside, the Greville Street door is locked merely with a hand-operated bolt—no key is required to open it. The Hatton Garden basement is accessed from the courtyard by a door with two sliding-bolt locks, and that door leads to the H.G.S.D. basement foyer. At the far side of the basement foyer is a white door, behind which is the H.G.S.D. air lock.

Strange things began happening starting in January 2015. The jeweler Wiffen felt "uneasy" and believed he and his shop were being watched. A few days before the heist, Katya Lewis, of Deblinger Diamonds, was visiting a diamond firm in 88–90 and had to wait what seemed like forever for the elevator. When it finally arrived, she found a crusty, aging repairman inside, wearing blue coveralls and surrounded by tools and building gear. "He smiled

apologetically, because there was no room for her to get in,” said the prosecutor, noting that a pair of blue coveralls was later found at the home of Terry Perkins, who had apparently been casing the building.

Then came the fire.

Just after 12:30 P.M. on Wednesday, April 1, a gas main ruptured and slowly leaked gas into the Victorian-era tunnels that now house London’s electrical and telecommunications cable networks. Then a spark in an electrical-junction box ignited the gas, causing dark, acrid smoke to billow from manhole covers and flames to shoot up geyser-like from the ground.

Power failed. Gas supplies ceased. Chaos ensued. Judges at the Royal Courts of Justice and students at the London School of Economics were among the thousands evacuated. Performances of West End shows, from *The Lion King* to *Mamma Mia!*, were canceled as dozens of firefighters and police officers dealt with the emergency. It would take nearly two days to bring the situation under control.

This was a fortuitous break for the thieves, entangling the cops and setting off dozens of false alarms.

“THEY WERE ANALOG CRIMINALS OPERATING IN A DIGITAL WORLD.”

Twitter

It was the Thursday before Easter and Passover weekend, and the jewelers of Hatton Garden deposited their goods in their safe-deposit boxes in the vault, believing that their jewels—and their own livelihoods—were safe. The area has more than 300 jewelry-related companies and 60 retail jewelry shops—one of the greatest concentrations of such businesses in the world.

It’s a community built on trust, but that trust is constantly tested by crime. “Hatton Garden has a number of people whose history is not exactly squeaky-clean,” said the late Hatton Garden jeweler Joel Grunberger in 2003, who consulted with director Guy Ritchie on his 2000 film, *Snatch*, with Brad Pitt and Jason Statham, about a London diamond heist gone wrong. “Honest dealers work cheek by jowl with the villains.”

Burglaries, robberies, and heists, one recorded as early as 1876, occurred so often over the years that, in 1946, the Garden’s merchants decided to build an impenetrable vault. “Sparkling diamonds—their value running into the millions—are giving Hatton Garden sleepless nights,” proclaimed the dramatic voice-over in a film short promoting the opening of Hatton Garden Safe Deposit Ltd., at 88–90 Hatton Garden. “To foil the thieves, Hatton Garden now has its own giant strong room.... Constructed at a cost of more than £20,000 [then roughly the equivalent of \$81,000], a two-foot-wide bomb-and-burglar-proof door—operated by a combination that has to be worked by at least two men—opens up a labyrinth of safes.”

Eventually, however, newer technology and the tenacity of the thieves outpaced the security

of the vault. "I had a box there for 35 years and closed it down after the third incident," said jeweler Alan Gard, recalling various robberies in the vault, one involving two security guards who made duplicate keys to boxes in the 1960s, another in which robbers tied up security guards and ransacked boxes in the 1990s, and a 2003 scam by a thief who posed as a jeweler, leased a box, and looted other boxes when no one was looking.

Nevertheless, most of the jewelers still believed the vault to be safe. The owners—for generations British but after multiple sales a family from Sudan—were apparently so confident of its construction that they gave their security guards weekends off. On the Thursday before the Easter/Passover weekend, there was practically a line of people to deposit their valuables. "Four carats, five carats, all shades, brilliant-cut, heart-shaped—a magnificent collection!" one jeweler told me, describing what he had stored in his box that weekend.

At 8:19 P.M. that Thursday, April 2, the staff locked up the vault for the long weekend. About an hour later, a curious sight passed in front of a CCTV camera on Greville Street: a thin man dressed in a blue jacket with a red wig and a flat cap, carrying a black bag on his shoulder, which hid his face from the cameras. This was the villain the police would later call Basil. Responsible for being the advance man, he evidently had keys with which he entered 88–90 through the front door and made his way to the basement fire door. It was his job to disable the alarms and the cameras inside the building, and to let the others in. This he did, making one crucial mistake: he neglected to disable two of the CCTV cameras, one in the fire-exit passage (the camera belonged to Berganza jewelers and was not on the 88–90 system) and another on the second floor of 88–90.

Shortly after Basil appeared, a CCTV camera outside, in the street, showed a white van pulling up to the building's fire-escape entrance and several men unloading tools, bags, and two wheelie bins, in full view of the people strolling home or to the pubs along the dark streets. These men were disguised as municipal workers, wearing reflective yellow vests—one of them bearing the word GAS on the back—hard hats, and white surgical masks.

But who were they really? Brian Reader was in a colorfully striped scarf, brown lace-up shoes, and striped socks; Terry Perkins in a dark sweatshirt, a hard hat, and a neck chain beneath his vest; Danny Jones in a baseball cap, red athletic shoes, and a "Montana 93" hoodie beneath his street-worker disguise.

Basil opened the fire-escape door for them from within, and the men unloaded their gear. Old Kenny Collins, in a green quilted jacket and a flat cabbie's cap, carrying a briefcase, apparently used a key to enter an office building across the street, where he would serve as a lookout, but, instead, according to one of his accomplices, he "sat up there and fell asleep."

It was to be a three-day job, during which they planned to loot all 996 safe-deposit boxes in the vault, as evidenced by diabetic Terry Perkins's bringing three days' worth of insulin. "Sixty-seven," Perkins later lamented of his advanced age. "Fucking 20 pills a day. I had it all with me, my injections. Yeah, if I don't take the insulin for three days you'd a had to carry me out in a wheelie bin."

Once inside the 88–90 fire-door corridor, the men evidently could not breach the white door that led to the H.G.S.D. basement foyer and the vault. But they had planned a more ingenious way to get in—one that presupposed deep inside knowledge of the building's layout. They walked up to the second floor and called the elevator, which they disabled, then returned to the ground floor, and pried open the elevator doors to the open shaft. Then one or more of them dropped down the 12 to 14 feet in the shaft from the ground floor to the basement. Once there they pried open the flimsy steel shutter covering the disused basement elevator door and entered the air lock. They managed to only partially disable the alarm by cutting the telephone cable and breaking off the G.P.S. aerial so that its signal range was compromised—but not quite compromised enough, it turned out. A short time later a text alert was sent to the monitoring company, which then contacted Alok Bavishi, another of the H.G.S.D. owners.



Detective Chief Inspector Paul Johnson addresses the press, April 9, 2015.

By Justin Tallis/AFP/Getty Images.

The phone rang in the Canary Wharf apartment of Kelvin Stockwell, chief custodian guard of the Hatton Garden Safety Deposit vault since 1995. He arrived shortly after one A.M. to find no sign of forced entry on the front door to the building or the fire exit. Nothing seemed amiss.

“It’s all locked up,” Stockwell told Bavishi, who was five minutes away in his car, so Bavishi turned his car around and headed home, leaving Stockwell to meet with the police. The police also dismissed the incident, concluding that “no police response was deemed to be required,” according to police reports.

Meanwhile, the team pulled the second air-lock iron gate open. They were in!

But still nearly two feet and an eternity from the safe-deposit boxes, which lay within a Chubb safe embedded in a nearly 20-inch-thick solid concrete wall. The wall would have been impenetrable to a drill in 1946, when the vault was constructed, but it was child’s play to the thieves’ Hilti DD350 diamond coring drill, a 77-pound, \$5,200 circular monster.

Now, at last, Danny Jones was able to apply what he’d spent so many nights studying on YouTube. Anchoring the Hilti drill to the floor and concrete wall, and connecting it to a water hose for cooling and reducing the amount of dust, they began boring through the concrete. The DD350 made only a quiet, water-splattering hum as it breached the concrete wall.

Within two and a half hours, three overlapping circular holes had been cut through the concrete. It should have been cause for celebration. But, instead, as Terry Perkins might have put it, “fuck me.” The thieves stared through the holes not into the diamond-filled vault but at a

wall of solid steel: the rear of a cabinet of safe-deposit boxes. Unmovable. Bolted to the ceiling and floor.

They had a Clarke pump and hose with a 10-ton hydraulic ram, strong enough to force the doors off of almost anything. But the pump broke. The steel cabinet stood firm.

“Carl, do something for fuck sake,” Danny Jones said to Carl Wood, who was “walking around in circles.”

Around eight A.M. on Friday, April 3, they temporarily surrendered, leaving the vault—but in a move that shocked the others, one of them left for good: the ringleader, Brian Reader. He was convinced that to return would mean certain capture. He made his way to the London Bridge subway station, where he returned home the same way he had come.

Jones and Collins didn’t walk away, though. Instead they went shopping—Collins driving, Jones buying—at two machinery-equipment shops in the London suburb of Twickenham, just two guys shopping for Saturday tools. At Machine Mart, Jones paid nearly \$140 for another fire-red Clarke pump ram and hose, using the name “V. Jones” (after Vinnie Jones, the actor from the 1998 heist movie *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels?*) and his street address on the receipt.

They returned around 10 P.M. on April 4. But, finding the fire-escape door locked, Carl Wood followed Brian Reader’s lead and quit.

“His asshole went and he thought we would never get in,” recalled Kenny Collins later. “The cunt. I said, ‘Give it another half-hour.’ [And he said], ‘Fuck, we’ve done everything we can do.... If we can’t get in, we won’t be able to get in, will we?’ ”

“And we did,” declared Perkins after Basil finally let them in again.

Collins returned to his post as lookout, while Perkins, Basil, and Jones went in with the new pump ram in its red box. Back at the vault, they used the metal joists they’d brought in earlier to anchor the new pump and hose to the wall opposite the vault, and 10 tons of pressure went to work.

“It was hissing, that pump, bang, didn’t it? [That’s] all I could hear, bang, and I thought for fuck sake, I had a headache,” said Jones.

Then Perkins exclaimed, “We’re in! We’re in!” And there it lay: the perfect score.

They could see the bounty beckoning. But they were still not inside the vault. Now at least one of them had to slither through the three overlapping concrete holes, a tiny opening measuring 10 by 18 inches across.

This ruled out the stocky Terry Perkins, who would later say he wished, as a sort of “fuck you” to Brian Reader, that he’d taken a selfie of himself as the goods were being ferried out to him. Inside the vault, fitness enthusiast Danny Jones and the slim Basil were busting open the old but still-sturdy metal deposit boxes with sledgehammers, crowbars, and angle grinders. Since

Hare Horror in Furness! Return of the Supernatural Bunnies - Beachcombing's Bizarre History Blog

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The outlandish, the anomalous and the curious from the last five thousand years

Hare Horror in Furness! Return of the Supernatural Bunnies *April 14, 2016*

Author: Beach Combing | in : Modern , [trackback](#)

Beach has recently been enjoying the splendour of supernatural rabbits and hares. Yes, dear reader, do you remember the thud of paranormal poltergeist bunnies? What about the legendary Baum Rabbit? Or the Welsh ghost rabbit as big as a sheep? Or Boudicca's sacrificial hare? Or the Mann witch trial hare? However, everything that he has shown to date pales into moon-white plainness compared to the Hare of the Dobbie of Furness. Now dobbies (dobby, dobbie) are, for the uninitiated, a northern country ghost, found particularly in northern Lancashire and Westmorland. Beach has always found that name 'dobby' to be spectacularly unthreatening. But the Furness dobbie made things so much worse by walking around the local fells – prepare yourself for the full horror! – with a hare in his pocket.

At such times, when the sound of footsteps, muffled by the snow, was heard between the soughs and moans of the wailing wind, the women cried, 'Heaven save us; 'tis th' White Dobbie,' as, convulsively clutching their little ones closer to their broad bosoms, they crept nearer to the blazing log upon the hearth, and gazed furtively and nervously at the little diamond-paned window, past which the restless wanderer was making his way, his companion running along a little way in advance, for not of the mysterious man alone were the honest people afraid. In front of him there invariably ran a ghastly-looking, scraggy white hare, with bloodshot eyes. No sooner however did anyone look at this spectral animal than it fled to the wanderer, and jumping into his capacious pocket, was lost to sight.

Do you feel the fear or have you been ground into unresponsiveness by the internet? This is how one woman encountered the dobbie and his pet.

Suddenly she uttered a shrill shriek, for she heard a hissing whisper at her ear and felt an icy breath upon her cheek. She dared not turn round, for she saw that the door opening upon the churchyard remained closed as before, and that occasionally passing within the range of her fixed stare, a white hare with blood-red eyes gambolled round the belfry.

Beach has tried and tried but he cannot recreate the suspense that evidently once so thrilled through the good folk of Furness as they listened to this story. As to why dobbie was running around with a hare in his pocket opinions are divided. But some of the older hands believed that the hare was the spirit of his victim (pre- or post-mortem)

Can anyone do better than this in the supernatural rabbit/hare stakes? Beach for once is confident that they cannot: [drbeachcombing AT yahoo DOT com](mailto:drbeachcombing@yahoo.com)

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Reykjavik's skeletons cause controversy - BBC News

bbc.com



By News from Elsewhere... ..as found by BBC Monitoring

♦ 22 April 2016



The cemetery dates back to the earliest days of Christianity in Iceland

Image copyright Visir

Plans for a new hotel in the Icelandic capital Reykjavik are causing controversy, as part of it will be built over the city's oldest cemetery.

Skeletons are already being removed from the site of the Vikurkirkjugardur cemetery, in which Reykjavik's dead were buried from around the year 1000 to 1838, Iceland Monitor news website reports. However, there's disquiet from some

sections of the city council and a former director of the National Museum of Iceland, who think the reburial of the capital's former residents harms national heritage.

"The city should be spared from a hotel in the cemetery," former museum director Por Magnusson wrote in an editorial piece in Iceland Monitor's parent title, Morgunbladid. "It could be turned into a beautiful and peaceful place in memory of past generations, instead of a drop-off point where tourists drag their luggage."

However, people working on the project around the old telecoms building where the cemetery lies say the controversy is a "misunderstanding", Morgunbladid reports. Archaeologist Vala Gardarsdottir said the cemetery was already known about when the building permit was issued, and that the site had already been disturbed by 20th-Century building projects, which this project largely replaces. This time, Vala tells Visir newspaper, the builders "are much better aware of their responsibility" toward historic sites.

Despite any controversy, Vala says the dig has already revealed clues about Iceland's past. She tells Iceland Review that "it is interesting to see the differing burial rituals within Christianity", and that the uncovered bones will give researchers a window into over 800 years of Reykjavik's history.

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HISTORIC MYSTERIES

Historic Mysteries

Doug MacGowan May 22, 2015 Unexplained

Genuine or forgery?



Efforts to crack the Rohonc Codex have been unsuccessful. Image Credit: The Codex from Rohonc Project

The Voynich Manuscript is an archaic but well-known book written in an unknown language accompanied by primitive illustrations about unknown topics. But it is not the only book that fits that description. The same could be said of a book currently housed in the Hungarian Academy of Sciences now known as the Rohonc Codex.

Some scholars believe the Codex (named after the city Rohonc in Hungary) to be genuine and have spent years trying to decode the text and illustrations, while others believe it to be a

deliberate hoax. But nothing has been proven for certain.

The Codex first possibly appears in history in 1743 in a catalog of a Rohonc library, where, despite nobody being able to read it, it is categorized as a prayer book. But it is not definitive that the book described here is the Codex and not some other prayer book actually written in a contemporary Hungarian language.

The Codex definitely enters history in 1838, when a Hungarian nobleman living in England, Gusztáv Batthyány, donated his entire library of books to the Academy and the Codex was included with the rest. The Codex is included in the catalog of his library, but there is no information about the book's origin or history before Batthyány. If Batthyány was questioned about the Codex and he provided concrete information about the document's origin, that information is lost in the history of the Codex.

Over the years, the Codex has repeatedly stumped researchers in their attempts to translate the Codex into a modern language. As early as 1840 the book was examined by Hungarian scholars to no avail. Other attempts in 1884 and 1890 resulted in dead ends. Sections of the Codex are available on the Internet for amateurs wanting to try to solve the mystery.

Claims of forgery and hoax began as early as the late 1860s when a researcher stated that the Codex was actually "written" by a Sámuel Literáti Nemes (1796–1842), an antiquarian known to have concocted multiple forgeries and spurious documents and books. Attempts to definitely link Nemes to the Codex, however, have been unsuccessful, despite the fact that Nemes was connected to other known forgeries created during the period of time the Codex was "found." One interesting fact that is known to be true: the paper used to create the Codex dates back to 16th century Italy.

The Codex is almost 450 pages long and contains about 90 cartoon-like illustrations of both battle and Christian themes. The number of individual alphabetic “letters” in the text of the Codex is far more in number than those of known archaic languages of the time and locale of Hungary. It is not clear if the text is to be read right to left or left to right.

Researchers have tried in vain to link up the characters in the Codex to known alphabets of history. Everything from manual code breaking to computer software have been unsuccessful.

The parallels to the above-mentioned Voynich Manuscript are readily apparent in side-by-side comparisons. Both are written in cryptic codes/languages and both give tantalizing hints of subject matter by way of equally cryptic illustrations.

But the work goes on in the hopes that the code can be cracked and the puzzle of the Codex can be solved. A future researcher or computer program may be the key to unlocking the secrets of the Codex.

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Doug MacGowan

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Romanian cave sealed for 5.5 million years is full of strange creatures | Science! | Geek.com

geek.com



GEEK

Romanian cave sealed for 5.5 million years is full of strange creatures

By Ryan Whitwam May. 12, 2016 4:31 pm



As humans were evolving in the plains of Africa, a different kind of evolution was taking place in Romania. The insectoid residents of Movile Cave were cut off from the outside world more than five million years ago, and that made for a very unusual ecosystem when the cave was discovered and opened up in the late 1980s. Movile Cave is believed to be the most isolated ecosystem in the world, and scientists are only just beginning to unravel its secrets.

It has taken years to begin cataloging the creatures in Movile Cave for several reasons. First, it's a dangerous environment with a poisonous atmosphere. Getting into the cave requires some familiarity with spelunking and diving, too. You have to go down a narrow 20-meter shaft, then climb through tiny limestone tunnels before reaching the main cavern. The Romanian government has also been very selective about who is permitted in the cave for fear of upsetting the delicate ecological balance. Only a few dozen scientists have been allowed to visit.

The few who have ventured into Movile Cave have discovered it's crawling with life — literally. The residents of Movile Cave are not concerned with the high levels of carbon dioxide and hydrogen sulphide in the air. With just half the usual concentration of oxygen, human visitors need breathing equipment to survive. The cave gets more crowded with insects the worse the air gets.

Most creatures in Movile Cave are believed to have arrived over five million years ago when limestone sealed the entrance. Most insects have since adapted to the complete darkness by losing their eyes and pigmentation. Many have also developed longer legs and antennae to feel around in the dark. There are unique species of spiders, waterscorpions (above), centipedes, pseudoscorpions (top), leeches (below),



Waterscorpion eating a crustacean.

and more.

The ecosystem relies entirely upon chemosynthetic bacteria that extract carbon from the air without the aid of light. The most numerous bacteria use carbon dioxide, and others get their carbon from methane. The bacterial film on the water and walls is where all the nutrients enter this ecosystem, and it's the only known example of such a system. Small animals eat the slime, and larger animals eat them.



leech

Scientists are interested in the animals in the cave, of course, but the bacteria could provide hints to how life worked when Earth was young. With the high heat, toxic air, and low light, conditions are very similar to Earth billions of years ago. Some are also exploring the idea of repurposing these bacteria to fight global warming, as carbon dioxide and methane are the biggest culprits.

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Russian 'eternal flame' replaced by cardboard painting - BBC News bbc.com



By News from Elsewhere... ..as found by BBC Monitoring

■ 29 April 2016



Image copyright Vitaly Nevar / Novy Kaliningrad

A Russian village has replaced the eternal flame on its war memorial with a painted piece of cardboard.

The monument, in the village of Pereslavskeye near the western city of Kaliningrad, honours Soviet soldiers who died in World War Two.

The village's addition to its war memorial didn't pass muster with Russian state TV

Despite being referred to as an "eternal flame", the monument is actually only lit on big occasions using a gas canister, the Novy Kaliningrad website reports.

State-run Rossiya TV says the cardboard painting looks like "a bad joke or a silent rebuke". Yevgeny Maslov, the official who runs the regional agency for cultural heritage, told the channel that it was the local authorities' idea.

"Tastes differ," he said, adding that the painting will be removed in time for Victory Day on 9 May, which celebrates the Soviet victory against Nazi Germany.

Memories of World War Two are very much alive in Russia, and eternal flame monuments play an important part in honouring soldiers killed in battle. There are some 4,000 such monuments across Russia, but only one-fifth of them are lit all the time, Rossiya TV reports.

Worried by the situation, President Vladimir Putin ordered the government to ensure uninterrupted gas supplies to eternal flames back in 2014, but progress appears to be limited.

Even though Russia has the world's largest reserves of natural gas, a third of the country's households are not connected to gas pipelines.

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Anthropology: The sad truth about uncontacted tribes

By Rachel Nuwer 4 August 2014

bbc.com



(Funai) (Credit: Funai)

Anthropology: The sad truth about uncontacted tribes

One of the world's last isolated tribes has apparently emerged from the forest. Rachel Nuwer investigates whether there is anyone left who has never seen the outside world, and discovers that 'first contacts' are often cursed by death and disease.

On July 1, Funai, the Brazilian governmental agency in charge of indigenous Indian affairs, quietly posted a short press release on its website: two days earlier, they said, seven members of an isolated Indian tribe emerged from the Amazon and made peaceful contact with people in a village near the Peruvian border.

As the first official contact with such a tribe since 1996, the event was out of the ordinary. But the event itself could have been anticipated. For weeks, local villagers in Brazil's Acre state had reported sightings of the tribesman, who supposedly came to steal crops, axes and machetes, and who "mimicked monkey cries" that frightened women and children.



Two members of an isolated indigenous tribe from the Amazon (Funai) (Credit: Funai)

Two members of an isolated indigenous tribe from the Amazon investigate a settled community of villagers in Acre, Brazil (Funai)

The Indians' decision to make contact was not driven by a desire for material goods, however, but by fear. With the help of translators who spoke a closely related indigenous Panoan language, the Acre Indians explained that "violent attacks" by outsiders had driven them from the forest. Later,

details emerged that their elder relatives were massacred, and their houses set on fire. Illegal loggers and cocaine traffickers in Peru, where the Indians are thought to come from, are likely to blame, according to the Brazilian government. Indeed, Funai's own nearby monitoring post was shut down in

2011 due to increasing escalations with drug traffickers.

Early contact with the Acre tribe, recorded by Funai

After they decided the situation called for drastic measures, the Indians did not just stumble upon the Brazilian village by chance – they probably knew exactly where to go. “They know far more about the outside world than most people think,” says Fiona Watson, research director for the non-profit organisation Survival International. “They are experts at living in the forest and are well aware of the presence of outsiders.”

This gets to the heart of a common misconception surrounding isolated tribes such as the one in Acre: that they live in a bubble of wilderness, somehow missing the fact that their small corner of the world is in fact part of a much greater whole – and one that is dominated by other humans. “Almost all human communities have been in some contact with one another for as long as we have historical or archaeological records,” says Alex Golub, an anthropologist at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. “Human prehistory is not like that game Civilization where you start with a little hut and the whole map is black.”

Fear factor

Today’s so-called uncontacted people all have a history of contact, whether from past exploitation or simply seeing a plane flying overhead. The vast majority of an estimated 100 or more isolated tribes live in Brazil, but others can be found in Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and northern Paraguay. Outside of the Americas, isolated groups live in Papua New Guinea and on North Sentinel Island of India’s Andaman Islands, the latter of which is home to what experts think is the most isolated tribe in the world, the Sentinelese. Nothing is known about their language, and Indian authorities have only rough estimates of how many of them exist today. But even the Sentinelese have had occasional brushes with other societies; members of their tribe have been kidnapped, helicopters sometimes fly over their island and they have killed fishermen who have ventured too close.



A member of the Yora tribe from the border between Bolivia and Peru - 1986 (Kim Hill) (Credit: Kim Hill)

A member of the Yora tribe from the border between Bolivia and Peru - 1986 (Kim Hill)

It is almost always fear that motivates such hostilities and keeps isolated groups from making contact. In past centuries and even decades, isolated tribes were often murdered and enslaved by outsiders. From the time white Europeans first arrived in the Americas, indigenous peoples learned to fear them, and passed that message down generations through oral histories. “People have this

romanticised view that isolated tribes have chosen to keep away from the modern, evil world,” says Kim Hill, an anthropologist at Arizona State University. But when Hill and others interview people who recently came out of isolation, the same story emerges time and time again: they were interested in making contact with the outside world, but they were too afraid to do so. As Hill puts it: “There is no such thing as a group that remains in isolation because they think it’s cool to not have contact with anyone else on the planet.”

Some have personal memories of traumatic encounters with outsiders. In the 1960s and 70s, Brazil

largely viewed the Amazon as an empty place in need of development. Indigenous people who stood in the way of that progress were given little or no warning before their homes were bulldozed over – or they were simply killed. In one case in Brazil's Rondônia state, a single man, often referred to as “the Last of His Tribe,” remains in a patch of forest surrounded by cattle ranches. His people were likely killed by ranchers years ago. When he was discovered in 1996, he shot arrows at anyone who dared to approach his home. Funai officials sometimes check up on his house and garden, and, as far as anyone knows, he's still living there today. “It's a really sad story of this one little pocket of forest left where this one lone guy lives,” says Robert Walker, an anthropologist at the University of Missouri. “He's probably completely terrified of the outside world.”



People from Brazil's Guaja tribe (Rob Walker) (Credit: Rob Walker)

People from Brazil's Guaja tribe
(Rob Walker)

In some cases in the 70s and 80s, the Brazilian government did try to establish peaceful contact with indigenous people, often with the aim of forced assimilation or relocation. They set up “attraction posts” – offerings of metal tools and other things indigenous Indians might find to be valuable – to try and lure them out of hiding. This sometimes led to violent altercations, or, more often than

not, disease outbreaks. Isolated people have no immunity to some bugs, which have been known to wipe out up to half of a village's population in a matter of weeks or months. During those years, missionaries traipsing into the jungle also delivered viruses and bacteria along with Bibles, killing the people they meant to save.

In 1987, Sydney Possuelo – then head of Funai's Department of Unknown Tribes – decided that the current way of doing things was unacceptable. After seeing tribe after tribe demolished by disease, he concluded that isolated people should not be contacted at all. Instead, natural reserves should be placed aside for them to live on, and any contact attempts should be left up to them to initiate. “Isolated people do not manifest among us – they don't ask anything of us – they live and die mostly without our knowledge,” he says. When we do contact them, he says, they too often share a common fate: “desecration, disease and death.”

Viral event

Unfortunately, history seems to be repeating itself. Three weeks after the Indians in Acre made contact, Funai announced that several of them had contracted the flu. All of them subsequently received treatment and vaccinations, but they soon returned to the forest. The fear, now, is that they will carry the foreign virus back with them to their home, spreading it to others who have no natural immunity.

“It's hard to say what's going to happen, other than to make doomsday predictions,” Hill says. “So far, things are looking just like they looked in the past.”

Possuelo – who was fired from Funai in 2006 after a disagreement with his boss over some of these concerns – issues a more direct warning: “What they do in Acre is very worrying: they are going to kill the isolated people,” he says. “The president of Funai and the Head of the Isolated Indians Department should be held accountable for not meeting established standards.” (Funai did not respond to interview requests for this story.)

Surprisingly, no international protocol exists that outlines how to avoid this predicament. "Every government and group involved in making contact just wings it according to their own resources and experiences," Hill says.

The common problem is a lack of institutional memory. Even in places like Brazil with decades of experience, Hill says, "each new government official takes on the task without knowing much about what happened in the past." Some officials, he adds, have minimal expertise. "Quasi-amateur is what I'd call them: government officials who come in with no medical, anthropological or epidemiological training."

Total denial

The situation in Peru, Watson points out, is even worse. "At one stage, the Peruvian government denied that uncontacted people even exist," she says. And now major oil and gas operations are allowed to operate on reserves containing their villages. Added to that is the presence of illegal loggers and drug traffickers – making for a very crowded forest.



A satellite image of a remote village (Google/Rob Walker) (Credit: Google/Rob Walker)

A satellite image of a remote village (Google/Rob Walker)

Native people living there seem to be well aware of these encroachments. Google Earth satellite images that Walker recently analysed reveal that one large isolated village in Peru seems to be migrating, year by year, further afield from outside encroachment on their land, including a planned road project. "Most people argue that what's going on here is that they're potentially being forced out of

Peru," he says. "It seems like they are running away."

When accidental harm from the outside world seems inevitable, Hill argues it would be better if we initiated contact. Slowly building up a long-distance friendship, he explains, and then carrying out a controlled contact meeting with medical personnel on site would be preferable. After that initial contact is made, anthropologists should be prepared to go back into the forest with the group and stay on site to monitor the situation for several months, as well as build up trust and communication. That way, if an epidemic should break out, help can be called for. "You can't just tell them after 15 minutes, 'Oh, by the way, if your whole village gets sick, send everyone out to this spot to get medical treatment,'" Hill says. "They won't comply with that."

It's unclear whether or not such a plan is being carried out in Acre, however. "Funai is not the most transparent organisation, and they have complete monopoly on what happens to remote people in Brazil," Hill says. "Unfortunately, that doesn't work in the best interest of native peoples."

Several members of an isolated indigenous tribe from the Amazon (Funai)

To ensure isolated groups have a future, both Brazil and Peru might need to become more transparent as well as more proactive about protecting them. No matter how remote the Amazon might seem, unlike the Sentinelese, South America's isolated groups do not live on an island cut off from the forces of mainstream society. "Everywhere you look, there are these pressures from mining, logging, narcotrafficking and other external threats," Walker says. "My worry is that if we have this 'leave-them-alone' strategy, at the end of the day the external threats will win. People will just go extinct."



Thanks to João Victor Geronasso for translation help for this story.

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Several members of an isolated indigenous tribe from the Amazon (Funai) (Credit: Funai)

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Did Satanic Giants Build Stonehenge?

rightwingwatch.org

RIGHT WING WATCH

Submitted by Brian
Tashman on Friday,
4/15/2016 3:00 pm

Televangelist Jim Bakker invited Dr. Dennis Lindsay on to his program on Wednesday to discuss Lindsay's latest discovery in the realm of Creation Science: the truth behind Stonehenge.

Hold on to your hats: Stonehenge, it turns out, was built by giants who were created by Satan.

Lindsay told Bakker that these giants were tools of the devil, who seeks to destroy Israel because "he's out to destroy God's creation and his whole plan of redemption and contaminate the human race."

But Satan wants to "have his own seed and make his own family," Lindsay explained, and so he created a race of giants who would attack Israel.

"He build his little squatter's hut up there on the Temple Mount, you know that temple, because he knows what the Bible says about that place," he said. "I weaved through why and what is the evidence for giant beings on this earth. We all know about Stonehenge, right? That's just one of hundreds and hundreds of gigantic places around the world that testify that some sort of supernatural power or giants were involved in its construction."

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The Satanic Temple Offers Children Reprieve From Abuse at School

dirgemag.com

“Aunt Meemaw used to slap me in the mouth with a belt whenever I sassed and I grew up just fine.” – People who grew up violent and unable to process basic information.

Growing up in the Deep South, corporal punishment was expected, at home, and at school. The principal of my elementary school, an otherwise dapper and kindly middle-aged man, kept a large wooden paddle with holes in it displayed in his office for the express purpose of scaring children with the threat of violence.

The cliché didn’t end there: it had a name. I don’t remember the name, because it was never used on me. I was a veteran of open-handed beatings from my frail but intensely violent mother and I knew how terrifying and unpleasant that could be, so I couldn’t conceive of the damage this heavy wooden bat could do when wielded by a grown man.

That seed of terror would metastasize into a lifelong resentment of authority. Sure, it was very effective at forcing temporary compliance, but I lost my respect for my principle, and parents, and eventually all authority figures which use violence instead of reason (and it turns out that violence is generally the only source from which authority is derived).

Even though people knew better even in the 1980s, it was very much the cultural norm. I was surprised and intrigued to read that The Satanic Temple, an activist church that eschews belief in the supernatural, was offering First Amendment religious protection to children subjected to corporal punishment in public schools.

Even having lived this, my first thought was, “Is this really necessary in 2016?” Like vaccines and autism, the verdict on spanking is in. The debate is over. As a new parent, I took for granted that when my children start school in a couple of years that having them subjected to physical violence would just not be on the table.

Surely the institutions built on principles of child development would be caught up on (not even the latest) definitive science.

Turns out, no.

Fucking of course not.

According to the Satanic Temple’s Protect Children Project website:

Per the report “A Violent Education,” issued in 2008 by the Human Rights Watch and the American Civil Liberties Union, corporal punishment at school has led to tens of thousands of emergency room visits where some children have even died from their wounds. Studies have

also shown a clear correlation between corporal punishment and lower IQ, depression, early heart attacks, and a higher propensity for addiction and obesity. It also adversely impacts family relationships. What's more, a report issued by the U.S. Alliance to Stop the Hitting of Children shows that spanking perpetuates child abuse and teaches children it is acceptable for people in positions of authority to resort to violence as a means of getting what they want.

Corporal punishment is practiced in 19 states, but where it is not permitted, many schools resort to placing students in solitary confinement sometimes called: "seclusion rooms," "isolation rooms," "decompression rooms," "time-out rooms," or "scream rooms." The prevalence of this form of punishment is dramatically rising even as its use is being markedly reduced in prisons because it is considered inhumane. According to Greaves, this form of punishment is also unacceptable treatment for Temple members. "The physical and psychological abuse of children is completely immoral. It is disturbing that no other religious organization has publicly expressed this sentiment and we sincerely hope our colleagues of other faiths will come forth to protect children from these kinds of violence and support our initiative."

So not only are they still beating the shit out of kids in public schools, they've added solitary confinement. Super.

What The Satanic Temple is offering is an online registration where students can affirm their beliefs, and a letter that can be printed out and given to school officials as due notice.

So do students have to swear their souls to Satan to be afforded protection from violence? Definitely not. Not only does The Satanic Temple not believe in a literal, supernatural devil, the only tenet of the church that a student need espouse is this one, quoted in the available letter:

I am a member of The Satanic Temple, a religious organization whose adherents believe one's body is inviolable and thus subject to one's own will alone. It is our religious belief that you do not have the right or authority to inflict pain or psychological abuse of any kind on any individual who attends your schools. This includes, without limitation, the use of corporal punishment, the imposing of physical restraints, restricting bathroom access, and the use of isolation rooms or other means of solitary confinement.

But is mere notice enough to enforce actual change? Can making a declaration of dissent and wielding a piece of paper actually spare the rod for vulnerable students and parents of students unable to opt-out of corporal punishment?

"One of the fundamental tenets of The Satanic Temple is personal sovereignty and the inviolability of one's body and mind. Hitting a child or placing them in solitary confinement goes entirely against our beliefs," says Lucien Greaves, Temple spokesperson. "The documents we have made available not only provide students with a notice they can give to their principal that explains their beliefs, but also informs schools that if they refuse to acknowledge the deeply held beliefs of students, they would be violating their civil rights. School officials could potentially face criminal charges if they disregard a student's

convictions. If students report to us that they have notified their principal of their religious views and they are physically or psychologically abused despite that, it is our intention to intervene.”

Perhaps the most terrifying thing about being subjected to institutional punishment as a child is the complete lack of agency. If your parents are on board with the beating, you are truly alone. While disciplinary violence is still legal at home in most of the country, now thanks to our culture of “religious freedom,” there is perhaps some positive spin that being subjected to mindless violence can be against your religion.

The same laws that protect honest bakers from the horrors of being forced to serve cakes to gays might actually protect some people – especially children – from the idiocies those very same people tend to commit.

“I’m a fan of man!” exclaims Al Pacino as the titular character in *The Devil’s Advocate*. And so it is with religious organizations like The Satanic Temple at the forefront of civil and human rights battles. But the question is, if the Devil is on our side, then who are we fighting?

Jinx Strange

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Satanists Snub Comparison of Cruz to Lucifer

2016-04-30

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<http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/satanists-snub-comparison-cruz-lucifer/story?id=38785064>

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ABC News

• By Ben Gittleson

INDIANAPOLIS — Apr 30, 2016, 11:42 AM ET

Prominent Satanists want to be clear: Ted Cruz need not apply.

After former House Speaker John Boehner on Wednesday called the current Republican presidential candidate "Lucifer in the flesh," saying he found it difficult to work with him, staunch Satanists decried the comparison.

"Having a conservative Christian likened to Lucifer -- one who opposes equal rights for same sex couples and promotes the ability to deny services to any with different values -- we Satanists see as besmirching the positive, heroic aspects of that character as portrayed by Milton in his epic 'Paradise Lost,'" Magus Peter Howard Gilmore, the high priest of The Church of Satan, said in a statement.

Lucien Greaves, a spokesman and co-founder for the Satanic Temple, told ABC News he thinks Cruz engages in "clearly deplorable behavior" and that Boehner's comments were "thoughtless and ignorant."

"Christians can't just push Cruz off on Satanists," Greaves said. "All he's trying to say is that Ted Cruz is some type of embodiment of evil. I think that's a rather destructive, backward mindset, because when you take clearly Christian individuals, clearly Christian activities, and things go sour, you pass them off as the influence of Satan.

"It really prevents you from thinking clearly," he said.

Cruz had previously dismissed Boehner's comparison, saying he had hardly interacted with the Ohio Republican over the years.

While Gilmore, the high priest, said that Satanists have not expressed any "collective support for any specific politicians," Greaves said Satanists do not "want" Cruz and that he "is everything opposite of what we represent."

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School Teaching Creationism With Video From Islamic Sex Cult

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OOPS

05.15.16 10:03 PM ET

An Ohio school district is using a video made by a Holocaust-denying Muslim to undermine evolution in science class.

Youngstown, Ohio, students are learning creationism in school with materials from a Islamic, Holocaust-denying group accused of being a sex cult.

A curriculum map (PDF) recommends teachers in this public school district show a creationist video, *Cambrian Fossils and the Creation of Species*, as part of 10th-grade science education. The video claims that the Cambrian Explosion “totally invalidates the theory of evolution.” The Cambrian Explosion was a time period, nearly 550 million years ago, where, over the next tens of millions of years, the number of species on Earth experienced a (relatively) rapid expansion by evolutionary standards. Christian creationists regularly point to this explosion of life as evidence for creation by God and against evolution.

Blink and you’d miss the Islamic connection in the video. A black screen flashes for less than one second that says “this film is based on the works of Harun Yahya.” In the right corner, there’s a gold bubble that says, “Muhammad is the messenger of Allah” in Arabic.

Harun Yahya, whom The Daily Beast has covered before, is a pseudonym for Adnan Oktar, a creationist cult leader and Islamic televangelist who owns Turkey’s A9 TV channel. Yahya (along with his followers) is the author of hundreds of books, including an 800-page Atlas of Creation, and another (PDF), which Oktar has now disavowed, titled *The Holocaust Deception: The Hidden Story of Nazi-Zionist Collaboration and the Inner Story of the Hoax of “Jewish Holocaust.”*

On Oktar’s A9 channel, a group of women in tight-fitting designer clothes and dyed blond hair help him promote Islam and attack evolution, all the while calling him “master.” Oktar refers to the women as his “kittens,” and as Slate reports, he “offers [his kittens] beauty as evidence of Islamic creationism.”

Anne Ross Solberg, an expert on Yahya, explained in a paper that while Oktar uses many of the same arguments as Christian creationists, and “undoubtedly takes inspiration from American-style creationism, Yahya’s creationism is far from just an American import” (PDF). He’s trying to prove that science backs up Islam.

“The message of Yahya is thus that science does not only confirm the existence of an intelligent designer, but divine creation as revealed by Allah,” Solberg writes.

Oktar has also hinted that he’s the Mahdi, a messianic figure in Islam, whose coming will signal the end times, and that his fight against evolution is part of fighting Islam’s Antichrist, the Dajjal.

“Oktar has never openly declared that he is the Mahdi,” writes Solberg, “At the same time, however, Oktar says that he cannot deny that he shares the physical characteristics of the Mahdi.”

On top of this, Oktar has been accused of blackmail where he snared powerful people with sex.

"As the criminal indictment vividly illustrates, young girls were lured into sex parties with the promise of being admitted to the group, but ended up having to perform sexual acts with men of influence, whom the group needed for its economic and political success," wrote the *New Humanist*, describing the charges against Oktar. "The encounters were filmed and used to coerce the men in question to act in the group's interest."

In 2008, Oktar was convicted of running an illegal organization for personal gain, but in 2010, the conviction was overturned.

"Oktar denied any of this activity was nonconsensual, and argued that because it included only oral and anal sex, it did not violate the teachings of Islam," The Daily Beast reported.

Youngstown City Schools did not answer questions about why they are using Adnan Oktar's materials in science class, but they probably weren't aiming to promote Harun Yahya Islam. Most creationists in America are Christian, and the majority of the religious materials that the Youngstown district is using are Christian.

The district's curriculum map calls for teaching "an alternative theory called Intelligent Design," which is another name for creationism. Youngstown suggests teachers show a creationist video, *Unlocking the Mystery of Life*, produced by the right-wing Christian advocacy group Focus on the Family and by the Discovery Institute, a creationist think tank.

"Students are reminded how the irreducibly complex system like the flagellum of a bacterial cell could not have evolved slowly, piece by piece and serves as a counter-example to evolution," says the curriculum, citing another disproven creationist talking point. It also recommends the video *Darwin's Dilemma*, also produced by the Discovery Institute. Other materials call evolution a "theory in crisis," and were created by the All About GOD ministries.

Teaching Islamic creationism isn't any worse than teaching Christian creationism, but it's unclear if creationist politicians in Ohio feel that way.

In 2014, state Rep. Andy Thompson sponsored a bill that would allow intelligent design creationism to be taught in Ohio's public schools. Rep. Thompson refused to comment for this article, because it did not "pertain to any pending legislation." Still, on his campaign website, Thompson makes it clear he's most interested in promoting Christianity.

"Shortly after taking office, President Obama sought to reach out to the Muslim world by speaking in Turkey. In that speech he made the comment that America is 'not a Christian nation,'" wrote Thompson. "I could not disagree more."

Thompson is not the only creationist politician in Ohio. In 2009, Gov. John Kasich, who recently suspended his presidential campaign, said he wanted both evolution and creation science taught in public school science class. (Kasich's office did not respond to repeated questions about whether he supports teaching Islamic creationism alongside Christian creationism.)

Still, like Rep. Thompson, Kasich only appears to be interested in the Christian side of things. In a November 2015 speech to the National Press Club, Kasich called for creating a "new [government] agency that has a clear mandate to promote the core, Judeo-Christian Western values that we and our friends and allies share." Presumably, Islamic creationism isn't included in that.

Youngstown City School District is trying to "teach the controversy," which is an old creationist argument for sneaking religion into schools, Americans United for Separation of Church and State's Rob Boston told The Daily Beast.

"The district is doing its students a disservice by pretending that a controversy exists when none does," Boston said. "That the district is apparently inadvertently using material produced by an evolution-denying, anti-Semitic Islamic TV preacher who has been accused of running a sex cult only makes the situation worse."

Part of the reason this district is able to teach creationism is, according to the Ohio Department of Education's Brittany Halpin, "Ohio is a local-control state and districts select and implement their own curriculum to serve their community."

That's not entirely accurate though: In 2015, the Kasich administration took over the school district, appointing a chief executive with the power to set curriculum, as *The Washington Post* reported. While the materials may have been originally created under local control, at this point, the responsibility for teaching Islamic creationism lies as much with the state and Kasich.

What happened in Youngstown, Ohio, is a warning for other creationist politicians and school districts: Sometimes when you use local control to teach the controversy over evolution, you're not just opening the door for Jesus: you're opening it for Islamic sex cults, too.

Editor's Note: This story has been updated to include that Youngstown schools are under state control.

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Scooter, briefly the world's oldest living cat, dead at 30

May 13, 2016

yahoo.com



This undated image provided by the Guinness World Records shows Scooter owned by Gail Floyd. The Siamese cat born during the Reagan administration has been named by Guinness World Records as the world's oldest. Guinness said Scooter celebrated his 30th birthday on March 26, 2016. (Gail Floyd/Guinness World Records via AP) MANDATORY CREDIT

MANSFIELD, Texas (AP) — A Siamese cat recently cited by the Guinness Book of World Records as the world's oldest living cat did not live to enjoy the title.

Scooter marked his 30th birthday on March 26. However, owner Gail Floyd of Mansfield, Texas, told the Fort Worth Star-Telegram that Scooter had died by the time Guinness conferred its title on April 8.

Dr. Tricia Latimer, a Mansfield veterinarian, says Scooter had lived to the equivalent of about 136 human years.

Scooter wasn't Guinness' oldest cat of all time, though. That mark belongs to a fellow Texas cat who lived to be 38.

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Malaysian school hit by 'mass hysteria' still closed, but journalists hear screams from the classrooms

Published Apr 17, 2016, 1:42 pm SGT

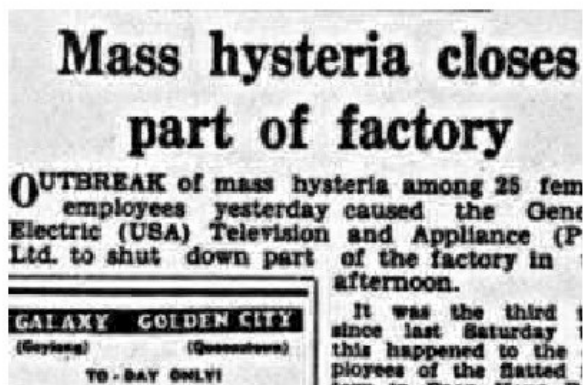
straitstimes.com

The gates of a school in Malaysia's state of Kelantan, where students have been plagued by "mass hysteria", remained closed to reporters on Sunday (April 17). PHOTO: THE STAR/ASIA NEWS NETWORK

KOTA BARU (THE STAR/ASIA NEWS NETWORK) - The gates of a school in Malaysia's state of Kelantan, where students have been plagued by "mass hysteria", were closed to reporters on Sunday (April 17) - the day the school was set to reopen - but screams were heard coming from the classrooms.

SMK Pengkalan Chepa 2 was shut down for three days last Thursday to allow bomohs, ustaz and Islamic traditional practitioners to rid the place of bad spirits.

It does not seem to be working.



A headline in a Straits Times article about a mass hysteria outbreak at the factory of General Electric (USA) Television and Appliance in January 1973.

From The Straits Times Archives: Past 'mass hysteria' cases in Singapore

Pressmen and photographers, who were stationed in front of the school, were shocked to hear the screaming and shouts emanating from the school compounds.

The school administration has conducted a two-hour recital of Quranic verses and held prayers together with the students.

It is learnt that a Chinese bomoh from Perak and his team entered the school compounds to assist in the situation.

At about 11.30am, more screams and shouts were heard, and attempts by the media to enter the school were unsuccessful.

Last Monday to Wednesday, more than 100 female and male students and teachers were allegedly struck by mass hysteria to the extent that the school was forced to shut down on Thursday to avoid more students from being possessed.

School principal Siti Hawa Mat and district education officials could not be reached for comment on Sunday.

At a press conference in Kelantan state capital Kota Baru on Thursday, Ms Siti said the closure of the school in Pengkalan Chepa was necessary to enable the bomoh and ustaz to perform prayers before the school was set to reopen on Sunday.

She said the studies of students of SMK Pengkalan Chepa 2 were disrupted, and her administration was at their wits' end to find a way to rid the school of "bad spirits".

Students and teachers have claimed to have seen paranormal beings like black spectres, pontianak and pochong.

The Straits Times

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PACIFIC COAST ITEMS.

canine vampire was recently captured

A genuine vampire was recently captured in Los Angeles.

The case of Maggie Reber, of Stockton, against George Natt, for \$10,000 for alleged seduction, has been settled by compromise, and the *Independent* says it is rumored that "the young bloods who were summoned as witnesses in the case put up a sack to have the thing settled."

A number of men are digging up Six-mile canyon, near Virginia, Nev., in search of buried treasure, supposed to have been planted there by the outlaw Davis, who was killed while attempting to rob Wells, Fargo & Co.'s express, near Battle Mountain, a few years ago.

A Chinaman recently took an Indian squaw as a wife at Hawthorne, Nev., and the tribe to which she belonged have declared that they will either have the squaw or the pagan's scalp. The Celestial has barricaded his house and hired a body-guard, and is waiting a good opportunity to leave with his bride.

The *Plumas County National* tells of a young man who got caught in a heavy snow-storm recently. He improvised snowshoes out of two milk-pans found in a deserted cabin, and fastened them to his feet with wire taken from an old broom. He then completed his journey, seven miles, without material trouble.

Fish by the load are being and have been captured daily, says the *Lower Lake Bulletin*, from Cache creek and the tributaries of the lake for some time past. This is the spawning season, and the fish go up the creeks in immense schools to deposit their spawn. They are in fine condition, very fat, and are so plentiful that they can actually be shoveled out of the shallow waters.

The *Wood River Times* says: Henry J. Scott, a prospector well known in Hailey, writes from Eagle City, Coeur d'Alene, under date of March 22d, as follows: "I have been here in the mines now more than three weeks, and I have not seen any mines as yet, and I do believe this is a — bilk. That is the opinion of a great many friends of mine, old prospectors and good miners, who all say this camp is no good."

The toughest story of the season is told by the *Sutter County Farmer*. It says: "Ducks and geese have been the greatest pests to grain in the vicinity of Butte creek, west of Gridley, in Butte county, but of late it is said that another pest has made its appearance. During the late frosts the

pearance. During the late freshets the sloughs were filled with water and the catfish found their way to the green pastures. We understand that Jesse Hobson says they are feeding on the grain."

A resident of Benicia, who was walking home the other night, was accosted and asked if he was an officer. On being answered in the affirmative, the tramp informed the citizen that in consideration of a quarter he would allow himself to be arrested and sent to the county jail. The citizen told Mr. Tramp to move on, as he would not give him a quarter. The tramp thereupon replied that he wished to be arrested and would be, and walked up to Rueger's block and deliberately smashed a large pane of glass in one of the windows.

Self-professed time-traveller pretty sure he'll win U.S. presidency

ottawasun.com



Ottawa Sun

Postmedia Network

First posted: Tuesday, April 26, 2016 03:00 PM EDT | Updated: Tuesday, April 26, 2016 03:35 PM EDT



Andrew Basiago. (Andy2016.com photo)

If Donald Trump or Hillary Clinton don't resonate with American voters, they always have Andrew Basiago -- a presidential candidate who is pretty sure he's going to become "either president or vice-president" between 2016 and 2028, according to information he's gathered time travelling.

Cheekily calling his campaign "a time for truth," Basiago, 54, brags on his site that he "served bravely in the two secret U.S. defence projects in which time travel on Earth and voyages to Mars were first undertaken."

Basiago -- who has made similar claims in the past -- also said he's helped several former presidents make important decisions by gathering knowledge through time travelling. Now it's his turn.

It's no surprise then that further exposing these secret technologies is a big part of the Seattle lawyer's promises if elected.

"Project Pegasus developed eight modalities of time travel by 1970, only to keep this great technical feat of our nation -- the advent of time travel -- secret from the American people," reads one of the independent candidate's promises. "Only by disclosing its time travel technologies can America unleash the potential that these technologies have to advantage humanity in the 21st century."

He's also promised to expose a secret Mars colony, alien contact, and wants to put the sasquatch on the endangered species list.

Basiago officially registered to run earlier this year. He's raising money on his website and through social media.

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Indonesia police confiscate sex toy mistaken for 'angel' - BBC News

bbc.com

**Indonesia police confiscate sex toy mistaken for 'angel'**

• 3 May 2016

*Pictures spread on social media of the apparent "angel"*

AFP/Indonesian Police

Indonesian police have confiscated a sex toy from a remote village after its inhabitants and some on social media mistook it for an "angel".

The doll was found in March floating in the sea by a fisherman in the Banggai islands in Sulawesi province.

His family took care of the doll, and pictures soon spread online along with claims it was an angel.

Police investigated amid fears the rumours would cause unrest, and found it was in fact an inflatable sex doll.

Indonesian news portal Detik said photos of the doll dressed demurely and wearing a hijab spread on social media shortly after its discovery.

Rumours then began to spread that it was a "bidadari" along with unverified stories about how it was found "stranded and crying", prompting the police investigation.

Many across Indonesia continue to hold strong beliefs in the supernatural, including the existence of "bidadari", which is a type of angel or spirit.

Local police chief Heru Pramukarno told reporters that villagers had found the doll shortly after the rare March solar eclipse that swept across South East Asia.

The timing of the discovery led some to believe the doll had a divine provenance.

"They have no internet, they don't know what a sex toy is," the police chief was quoted as saying by AFP news agency.

In 2012, a TV station in China's Xian city apologised after running a false report that a local farmer had discovered a giant piece of precious lingzhi mushroom.

The fleshy object, found in a well by the farmer, was identified by many viewers as a sex toy made of silicone.

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Shark bite in Boca Raton: Woman taken to hospital with nurse shark attached to her arm

2016-05-16

sun-sentinel.com

Palm Beach County News



Shark bite in Boca Raton

A 23-year-old woman bitten by a small nurse shark was taken to the hospital Sunday afternoon with the 2-foot shark still attached to her arm, according to a spokesman for Boca Raton Ocean Rescue.

It was an alarming sight for beachgoers when a woman walked out of the water with a nurse shark biting a meaty portion of her right forearm.

And no matter what she did, the 2-foot shark refused to release its bite. Even when it died.

Paramedics ultimately took the woman — with the dead shark still attached to her arm — to Boca Raton Regional Hospital on Sunday afternoon, according to Boca Raton Ocean Rescue.

The woman was in stable condition, officials said.

"The shark wouldn't give up," said Shlomo Jacob, of Boca Raton, among the beachgoers who looked on. "It was barely breathing but it wasn't letting go of her arm, like it was stuck to her or something."



A nurse shark bit a woman on the beach Sunday afternoon in Boca Raton.

As the commotion unfolded, swimmers scampered out of the water, suddenly unsure of what other dangers may lurk.

Ocean Rescue Capt. Clint Tracy saw the woman and the shark as they were put into an ambulance at Red Reef Park about 1:30 p.m. "I have never seen anything like it," Tracy said. "Never even heard of anything like

this."

Beachgoers said one or more people were antagonizing the nurse shark in the water. Tracy, the Ocean Rescue captain, said he didn't know how the woman came in contact with it.

Nate Pachter, 11, of Boca Raton, said he and his cousin were snorkeling when he saw the group "holding the shark by its tail. They were messing with it."

Small nurse shark bites woman in Boca Raton
Courtesy Boca Raton Fire Rescue

A woman at the beach in Boca Raton near the 1400 block of North Ocean was was bitten by a small nurse shark on May 15, 2016.



"Sharks are like the most humane thing ever," Nate said later, as he sat with his parents on the beach. "So it wouldn't bite them if they hadn't been messing with it."

It was about 1:20 p.m. when the woman, in a turquoise-colored two-piece, appeared near Lifeguard Station No. 8, with the shark attached to her.

The woman remained calm, and there was little blood, according to Tracy.

A male companion was by the woman's side holding the shark, but as the minutes passed and the crowd grew, she became unsettled. When paramedics arrived, they gave her oxygen, witnesses said.

A splint board was used to support the woman's arm and the shark as she was placed on the stretcher to take her to the hospital, Tracy said.

The woman's name hasn't been released, so she couldn't be reached for comment.

Lifeguard Dylan Narcowich was on duty in Tower No. 8 and responded. He said he previously had seen the woman and her companion swimming near a submerged rock pile about 60 feet from shore.

"There's a rock pile where she was at and there are two more over there where they kind of hang out," said Narcowich, referring to the sharks that occasionally swim near the submerged formations.

Nurse sharks are common in offshore Florida waters and can grow up to 14 feet in length.

They are able to breathe while remaining still by pumping water through their mouths and out their gills, and are sometimes seen stationary on the ocean floor, according to researchers.

They are also known for having strong jaws filled with thousands of tiny, serrated teeth.

"Knowingly or not, people swim near nurse sharks every day without incident," according to the National Park Service. "Attacks on humans are rare but not unknown and a clamping bite typically results from a diver or fisherman antagonizing the shark with hook, spear, net or hand.

"The bite reflex is such that it may be some minutes before a quietly re-immersed nurse shark will relax and release its tormentor," according to a National Park Service brochure prepared for visitors to Florida waters. "The small teeth seldom penetrate deeply but are razor sharp.

"Holding still reduces damage to both shark and man. Leaving sharks alone is the best tactic."

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Magia Posthuma On several occasions, particularly on the periphery of the Habsburg Empire during the 17th and 18th centuries, dead people were suspected of being revenants or vampires, and consequently dug up and destroyed. Some contemporary authors named this phenomenon Magia Posthuma. This blog is dedicated to understanding what happened and why. Maintained and Copyright Niels K. Petersen

Sunday, 19 August 2007

<http://magiaposthuma.blogspot.com/2007/08/magia-posthuma-and-shepherd-from-blov.html>

Magia posthuma and the shepherd from Blöv

Frequently Karl Ferdinand von Schertz's 1706 book *Magia Posthuma* is referred to as the first book on vampires, or as the first 'widely read' book on vampires. It often seems unclear what is the background for these statements, but as far as we can judge from Calmet's description of von Schertz's book, *Magia Posthuma* was mainly concerned with the revenants of Moravia and neighbouring areas. In fact, von Schertz apparently wrote the book to give a juridical evaluation of the legal proceedings of the authorities in contemporary cases where bodies were exhumed, examined and in some cases destroyed because they were suspected of *Magia Posthuma*.

Many of these cases are documented - although often briefly - in contemporary sources, and the dead bodies not always appear as revenants, but are at times suspected of posthumous magic simply because they lack the expected signs of corruption. In other cases, they do actually disturb people, although not necessarily in the shape of the dead person, and usually they are not recorded to suck blood! In fact, one researcher rather considers these revenants as poltergeists than as vampires, whereas others relate them to other kinds of revenants known by other characteristics than blood sucking.

Von Schertz probably didn't know the word 'vampire', which first became well-known throughout Europe after the 1732 Medvedja vampire case, but he was aware of earlier tales of revenants. One tale was that of the shepherd from Blöv in Bohemia (situated northwest of Prague at approximately latitude 56.324 N and longitude 13.295 E), which was also related by Johann Weichard Valvasor (1641-1693) in *Die Ehre des Herzogthums Krain* (1689). The story can be traced to the 16th century *Böhmische Chronica* written by Wenceslaus Hagecius (Wenzel Hájek von Libotschan/Václav Hájek z Libočan; died 1553) and further back to the *Kronika Neplachova*, i.e. Neplach's Chronicle, which is also known by the Latin title *Summula Chronicae tam Romanae quam Bohemicae* written by the Benedictine abbot Jan Neplach (1322-1371).

In the chronicle, the year 1336 A.D. is described this way:

"A. d. MCCCXXXVI Philippus, filius regis Maiorikarum, cum XII nobilibus regni ordinem fratrum Minorum in vigilia Nativitatis Christi ingreditur et in Boemia circa Cadanum ad milliare unum in villa dicta Blöv quidam pastor nomine Myslata moritur. Hic omni nocte surgens circuibat omnes villas in circuitu hominis terrendo et iugulando et loquebatur. Et cum fuisset cum palo transfixus: dicebat, multum nocuerunt michi, nam dederunt michi baculum, ut me a canibus defendam; et cum cremandus efoderetur, tumebat sicut bos et terribiliter rugiebat. Et cum poneretur in ignem, quidam arripiens fustem fixit in eum et continuo eupit cruor sicut de vase. Insuper cum fuisset effossus et in currum

Magia Posthuma is the title of a book written by the Catholic lawyer Karl Ferdinand von Schertz in 1706. In the book von Schertz examines the case of a spectre that roamed about and harmed the living. Several of these cases were known in Moravia where von Schertz published his book, as well as in neighbouring areas. Only two decades later, a similar case was investigated by Austrian officials in North Eastern Serbia. The local people called the spectre *avampire*. This incident inspired the deacon Michael Ranft to publish a study on the *mastication of the dead*. Just a few years later, in 1732, another case of vampirism was investigated in Serbia. Reports of this investigation were published throughout Europe with the consequence that the interest in vampires exploded. Vampires became the topic of numerous learned articles and books. Cases of *magia posthuma* or vampirism, however, kept occurring. In 1755 empress Maria Theresia aided by her court physician Gerard van Swieten began passing laws against the exhumation and destruction of corpses as well as other acts of superstition. Within decades, however, vampires caught the imagination of poets and authors of *gothic fiction*. Subsequently popularized by Bram Stoker in his 1897 novel *Dracula* and numerous movies, vampires have become part of everyday modern mythology, but the historical and cultural background has not yet been fully explored and understood. In fact, the modern conception of the vampiric count bears little or no resemblance to the *revenants* of the 18th century, and several modern books rather obscure than enlighten us on the early modern European revenants and vampires. This blog is an informal and personal contribution to the enterprise of exploring and understanding what happened and why.

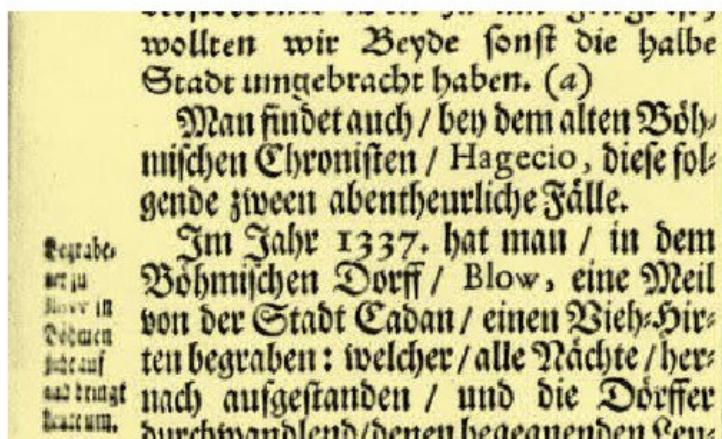
Magia Posthuma On several occasions, particularly on the periphery of the Habsburg Empire during the 17th and 18th centuries, dead people were suspected of being revenants or vampires, and consequently dug up and destroyed. Some contemporary authors named this phenomenon Magia Posthuma. This blog is dedicated to understanding what happened and why. Maintained and Copyright Niels K. Petersen

positus, collegit pedes ad se sicut vivus, et cum fuisset crematus totum malum conquievit, et antequam cremaretur, quemcumque ex nomine in nocte vocabat, infra octo dies moriebatur. Eodem eciam anno Johannes papa XXI moritur et Benedictus XII in papam eligitur.'

In my rudimentary translation this means:

"A.D. 1336 Philip, son of the king of Majorca, entered the [Franciscan] Order of Friars Minor along with 12 nobles of the kingdom on Christmas Eve Day. In Bohemia about one mile from Cadan in a village called Blow a certain shepherd called Myslata died. Every night he rose and went about every farm in the area and spoke to frighten and kill people. When he had been impaled with a stake, he said: They hurt me much, as they gave me a staff to defend me from the dogs; and when he was exhumed for cremation, he swelled up like an ox and roared terribly. When he was placed in the fire, someone grabbed a stick and put it into him, and immediately blood poured out from him as from a vessel. Furthermore, when he had been dug up and was being put on a cart, he drew his feet to himself as if alive, and before he was cremated, anyone whom he called by name at night, died within eight days. Also the same year the pope John XXI died and Benedict XII was elected as pope."

It is quite obvious that there is no mention of bloodsucking, and that blood ('cruor') is only mentioned in connection with the state of the dead body. His malice seems to be confined to haunting the neighbourhood and naming people who consequently die within eight days. The means that are used to destroy him are very similar to those used against vampires - stakes and fire - so, obviously, there are similarities, but would we call the shepherd a vampire or just a revenant?



Valvasor on the shepherd from Blow

Claude Lecouteux mentions the shepherd from Blou under the classification 'Rufer' (someone who yells or calls out) in the German translation of his book on vampires, as the deaths of his victims are

Magia Posthuma is the title of a book written by the Catholic lawyer Karl Ferdinand von Schertz in 1704. In the book von Schertz examines the case of a spectre that roamed about and harmed the living. Several of these cases were known in Moravia where von Schertz published his book, as well as in neighbouring areas. Only two decades later, a similar case was investigated by Austrian officials in North Eastern Serbia. The local people called the spectre *avampire*. This incident inspired the deacon Michael Ranft to publish a study on the *mastication of the dead*. Just a few years later, in 1732, another case of vampirism was investigated in Serbia. Reports of this investigation were published throughout Europe with the consequence that the interest in vampires exploded. Vampires became the topic of numerous learned articles and books. Cases of magia posthuma or vampirism, however, kept occurring. In 1755 empress Maria Theresia aided by her court physician Gerard van Swieten began passing laws against the exhumation and destruction of corpses as well as other acts of superstition. Within decades, however, vampires caught the imagination of poets and authors of *gothic fiction*. Subsequently popularized by Bram Stoker in his 1897 novel *Dracula* and numerous movies, vampires have become part of everyday modern mythology, but the historical and cultural background has not yet been fully explored and understood. In fact, the modern conception of the vampiric count bears little or no resemblance to the *revenants* of the 18th century, and several modern books rather obscure than enlighten us on the early modern European revenants and vampires. This blog is an informal and personal contribution to the enterprise of exploring and understanding what happened and why.

Magia Posthuma On several occasions, particularly on the periphery of the Habsburg Empire during the 17th and 18th centuries, dead people were suspected of being revenants or vampires, and consequently dug up and destroyed. Some contemporary authors named this phenomenon Magia Posthuma. This blog is dedicated to understanding what happened and why. Maintained and Copyright Niels K. Petersen

caused by him saying aloud their names (and thereby probably calling them to him).

So it would be more appropriate to use the term Magia Posthuma in this case, as this term seems to cover both vampires and other revenants that haunt and molest the living, whose corpses exhibit no signs of ordinary corruption and must be destroyed by various means to stop the threat from the dead. I admit that I know of no use of the term prior to Von Schertz's book, but I find the term fitting for a subject that cannot be restricted to the Serbian vampire of the 18th century, but must take into account prior cases of 'living corpses' from other parts of Europe.

Finally, I like the term because it includes the word Magia and consequently can be linked to both the witch hunt and various 'systems of belief' that involved the concept of 'Magia', which incidentally is usually translated as 'Zauberei' in German. 'Magia Posthuma' thereby presents us with a link to the history and concepts of theology, demonology and witchcraft cases that can help us better understand the context of the famous cases of vampires and revenants of the 17th and 18th centuries. In fact, certain scholars claim that in some areas the witch hunt was succeeded by the cases of vampires and other forms of Magia Posthuma.

By the way, according to The Oxford Dictionary of Popes, pope John XII died on December 4th 1334 and was succeeded by Benedict XII on December 20th that year, so obviously Neplach's dates are not precise! As the above excerpt from Valvasor's book shows, he sets the incident in 1337, so here is a good example of how a story has evolved over the years.

The Latin text of Neplach's chronicle is actually available on the internet.

<http://www.clavmon.cz/clavis/FRRB/chronica/IOHANNIS%20NEPLACHONIS%20CHRONICON.htm>

Posted by Niels K. Petersen at 00:21 Sunday, 19 August 2007

Labels: Bohemia, Magia Posthuma, Neplach, revenants, Schertz, shepherd of Blow, Valvasor

Magia Posthuma is the title of a book written by the Catholic lawyer **Karl Ferdinand von Schertz** in 1704. In the book von Schertz examines the case of a **spectre** that roamed about and harmed the living. Several of these cases were known in **Moravia** where von Schertz published his book, as well as in neighbouring areas. Only two decades later, a similar case was investigated by Austrian officials in North Eastern **Serbia**. The local people called the spectre **avampire**. This incident inspired the deacon **Michael Ranft** to publish a study on **the mastication of the dead**. Just a few years later, in 1732, another case of vampirism was investigated in Serbia. Reports of this investigation were published throughout Europe with the consequence that the interest in vampires exploded. Vampires became the topic of numerous learned articles and books. Cases of magia posthuma or vampirism, however, kept occurring. In 1755 empress **Maria Theresa** aided by her court physician **Gerard van Swieten** began passing laws against the exhumation and destruction of corpses as well as other acts of superstition. Within decades, however, vampires caught the imagination of poets and authors of **gothic fiction**. Subsequently popularized by **Bram Stoker** in his 1897 novel *Dracula* and numerous movies, vampires have become part of everyday modern mythology, but the historical and cultural background has not yet been fully explored and understood. In fact, the modern conception of the vampiric count bears little or no resemblance to the **revenants** of the 18th century, and several modern books rather obscure than enlighten us on the early modern European revenants and vampires. This blog is an informal and personal contribution to the enterprise of exploring and understanding what happened and why.

Should Martians have equal rights?

17:20 EST, 11 May 2016 |

dailymail.co.uk

Daily Mail

MailOnline US - news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories

- Since humanities scholars are only just now beginning to think critically about these kinds of post-contact questions, naïve positions are common
- Say we should do nothing with Mars, because it belongs to the Martians
- Unrealistic moral ideals will make

officials find ways around them

- Choose whose interest to maximize, but morally obligated to humans

By Kelly C. Smith With The Conversation

NASA's chief scientist recently announced that '...we're going to have strong indications of life beyond Earth within a decade, and I think we're going to have definitive evidence within 20 to 30 years.'

Such a discovery would clearly rank as one of the most important in human history and immediately open up a series of complex social and moral questions.

One of the most profound concerns is about the moral status of extraterrestrial life forms.

Scroll down for videos



© NASA/JPL-Caltech/MSSS

Such a discovery would clearly rank as one of the most important in human history and immediately open up a series of complex social and moral questions. One of the most profound concerns is about the moral status of extraterrestrial life

forms

SHOULD MARTIANS BE TREATED FAIRLY?

Researchers discuss the idea of 'Mariomania', which can be traced back to Carl Sagan, who famously proclaimed:

If there is life on Mars, I believe we should do nothing with Mars.

Mars then belongs to the Martians, even if the Martians are only microbes.

Chris McKay, one of NASA's foremost Mars experts, goes even further to argue that we have an obligation to actively assist Martian life, so that it does not only survive, but flourishes:

...Martian life has rights. It has the right to continue its existence even if its extinction would benefit the biota of Earth.

But researchers explain that we should of course seek compromise where possible, but to the extent that we are forced to choose whose interests to maximize, we are morally obliged to err on the side of humans.

The solution is to do the hard work of formulating the right principles, at the right level of generality, before circumstances render moral debate irrelevant.

This requires grappling with the complex trade-offs and hard choices in an intellectually honest fashion, while refusing the temptation to put forward soothing but impractical moral platitudes.

Since humanities scholars are only just now beginning to think critically about these kinds of post-contact questions, naïve positions are common.

Take Martian life: we don't know if there is life on Mars, but if it exists, it's almost certainly microbial and clinging to a precarious existence in subsurface aquifers.

It may or may not represent an independent origin – life could have emerged first on Mars and been exported to Earth.

But whatever its exact status, the prospect of life on Mars has tempted some scientists to venture out onto moral limbs.

Of particular interest is a position I label 'Mariomania.'

Mariomania can be traced back to Carl Sagan, who famously proclaimed:

If there is life on Mars, I believe we should do nothing with Mars.

Mars then belongs to the Martians, even if the Martians are only microbes.

Chris McKay, one of NASA's foremost Mars experts, goes even further to argue that we have an obligation to actively assist Martian life, so that it does not only survive, but flourishes:

...Martian life has rights. It has the right to continue its existence even if its extinction would benefit the biota of Earth.

Furthermore, its rights confer upon us the obligation to assist it in obtaining global diversity and stability.

To many people, this position seems noble because it calls for human sacrifice in the service

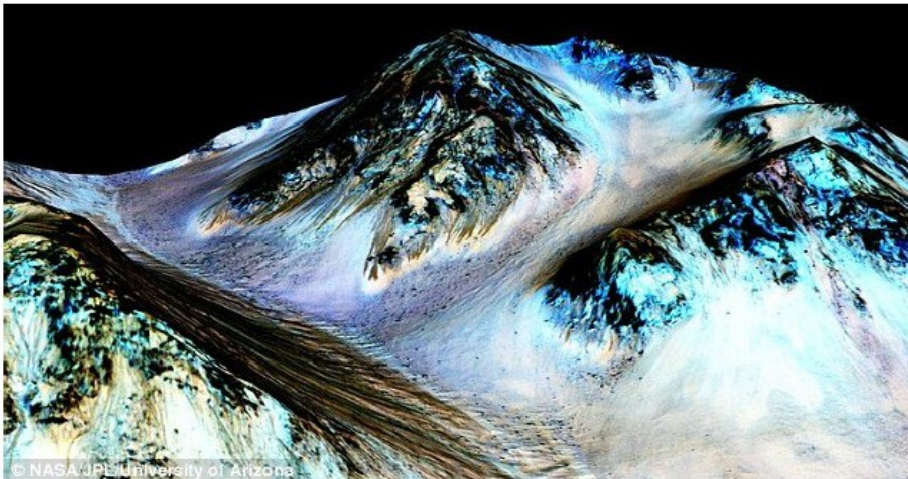
of a moral ideal.

But in reality, the Mariomaniac position is far too sweeping to be defensible on either practical or moral grounds.

Suppose in the future we find that:

There is (only) microbial life on Mars.

We have long studied this life, answering our most pressing scientific questions.



Take Martian life: we don't know if there is life on Mars, but if it exists, it's almost certainly microbial and clinging to a precarious existence in subsurface aquifers. the prospect of life on Mars has tempted some scientists to venture out onto moral limbs. Streaks down Martian mountains mean water

once flowed

It has become feasible to intervene on Mars in some way (for instance, by terraforming or strip mining) that would significantly harm or even destroy the microbes, but would also be of major benefit to humanity.

Mariomaniacs would no doubt rally in opposition to any such intervention under their 'Mars for the Martians' banners.

EUROPEAN-RUSSIAN MISSION'S TO MARS

The ExoMars Trace Gas Orbiter (TGO) launched from Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan aboard a heavy lift Proton rocket at 9.31am GMT to begin a seven-month, 300 million-mile (483 million km) journey to the red planet.

It is due to analyse Mars' atmosphere to search for low levels of gases such as methane that may betray the presence of alien life on the planet's surface.

ExoMars 2016 is the first phase of an historic €1.2 billion (£924 million) joint European-Russian mission to search for biochemical 'fingerprints' of past or present life high above Mars and on its surface.

Scientists believe the probe has the potential to find 'very strong evidence' of alien life when it arrives at Mars on 19 October.

If all goes to plan, TGO will make a detailed inventory of Mars' atmospheric gases, with particular interest in rare gases such as methane.

Methane could provide one of the biggest clues to whether life exists on Mars.

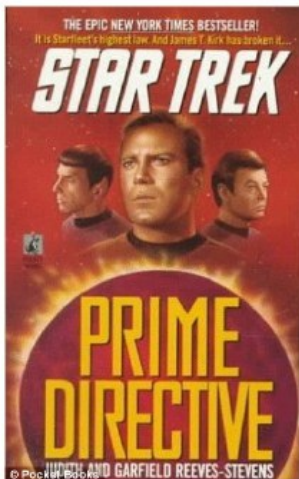
After a seven-month cruise, the lander will separate from the TGO on 16 October and land on Mars on 19 October.

TGO will then enter orbit around Mars and will serve as a data relay for the second ExoMars mission, which will involve a rover and laboratory on Martian soil, planned for launch in 2018.

Esa said the launch of ExoMars 2016 will mark the start of a new era of Mars exploration for Europe.

Both Europe and Russia's fortunes have been mixed when it comes to Mars missions before, with Esa's Mars Express mission successfully putting a spacecraft into orbit in 2003, but its Beagle 2 lander failing to communicate with Earth.

From a purely practical point of view, this probably means that we should not explore Mars at all, since it is not possible to do so without a real risk of contamination.



Hollywood's version of, Star Trek's 'Prime Directive', moral obligation can be a starting point for our real-world ethical discussion

Beyond practicality, a theoretical argument can be made that opposition to intervention might itself be immoral:

Human beings have an especially high (if not necessarily unique) moral value and thus we have an unambiguous obligation to serve human interests.

It is unclear if Martian microbes have moral value at all (at least independent of their usefulness to people).

Even if they do, it's certainly much less than that of human beings.

Interventions on Mars could be of enormous benefit to humankind (for instance, creating a 'second Earth').

Therefore: we should of course seek compromise where possible, but to the extent that we are forced to choose whose interests to maximize, we are morally obliged to err on the side of humans.

Obviously, there are a great many subtleties I don't consider here.

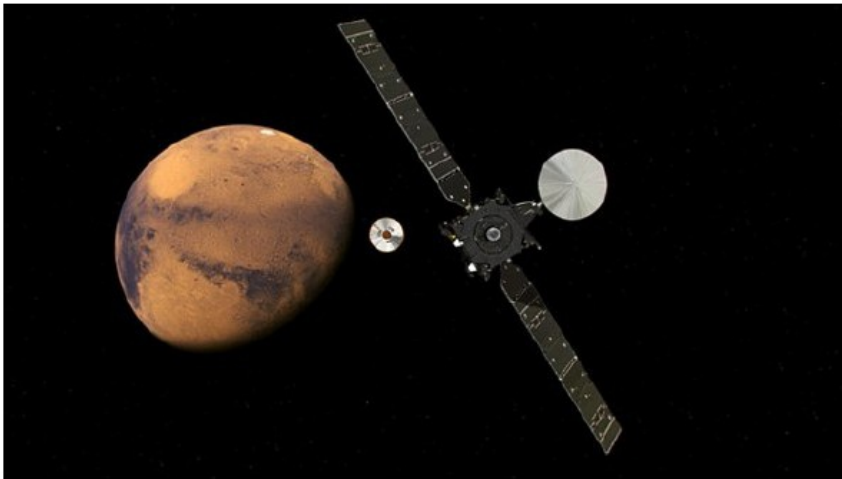
For example, many ethicists question whether human beings always have higher moral value than other life forms.

Animal rights activists argue that we should accord real moral value to other animals

because, like human beings, they possess morally relevant characteristics (for instance, the ability to feel pleasure and pain).

But very few thoughtful commentators would conclude that, if we are forced to choose between saving an animal and saving a human, we should flip a coin.

Simplistic claims of moral equality are another example of overgeneralizing a moral principle for rhetorical effect.



Mariomania can be traced back to Carl Sagan, who famously proclaimed: If there is life on Mars, I believe we should do nothing with Mars. Mars then belongs to the Martians, even if the Martians are only microbes. Researchers say we need to find a moral status for our initial dealings with Mars

Whatever one thinks about animal rights, the idea that the moral status of humans should trump that of microbes is about as close to a slam dunk as it gets in moral theory.

METHANE ON MARS

More than 90% of methane on Earth is produced by living organisms, making the recent detection of the gas in the northern hemisphere of Mars of great interest.

Methane has a chemical lifetime of between 300 and 600 years, so if it is detected, it can't have been produced 4.5 billion years ago, when the planets formed.

If methane is being produced biologically, it may be by microscopic organisms living below the surface of the red planet.

Or it was made by extinct methanogenes that left methane frozen in the Martian surface, which is being gradually released.

The methane could also have a geological origin, in which case it may be provided by the oxidation of iron, similar to what occurs in terrestrial hot springs, or in active volcanoes.

On the other hand, we need to be careful since my argument merely establishes that there can be excellent moral reasons for overriding the 'interests' of Martian microbes in some circumstances.

There will always be those who want to use this kind of reasoning to justify all manner of human-serving but immoral actions.

The argument I outline does not establish that anyone should be allowed to do anything they want to Mars for any reason.

At the very least, Martian microbes would be of immense value to human beings: for example, as an object of scientific study.

Thus, we should enforce a strong precautionary principle in our initial dealings with Mars (as a recent debate over planetary protection policies illustrates).

Mariomania seems to be the latest example of the idea, common among undergraduates in their first ethics class, that morality is all about establishing highly general rules that admit no exception.

But such naïve versions of moral ideals don't long survive contact with the real world.

By way of example, take the 'Prime Directive' from TV's 'Star Trek':

NASA's Mars orbiter has clocked over a decade of service

...no Star Fleet personnel may interfere with the normal and healthy development of alien life and culture...Star Fleet personnel may not violate this Prime Directive, even to save their lives and/or their ship...This directive takes precedence over any and all other considerations, and carries with it the highest moral obligation.

As every good trekkie knows, Federation crew members talk about the importance of obeying the prime directive almost as often as they violate it.

Here, art reflects reality, since it's simply not possible to make a one-size-fits-all rule that identifies the right course of action in every morally complex situation.

IS THERE A VOLCANO BELOW THE MARTIAN SURFACE?

Dr Manish Patel, from the Open University, who leads the team in charge of TGO's ultraviolet spectrometer instrument, said: 'Methane is a biologically relevant gas but its presence on Mars is controversial. This mission (ExoMars 2016) was born out of that controversy to solve this question.

'We will map the methane globally and take vertical profile measurements, not only seeing where it is but whether it is close to the surface, evenly distributed or at the top of the atmosphere.

'We can start to follow it around. If we see a glob of methane we can backtrack and see where it came from.'

Geological methane may be generated by volcanic activity or water reacting with the mineral olivine, or released from clathrates - frozen ice-like deposits that trap the gas in a chemical 'cage'.

Not long ago Mars was regarded as a geologically 'dead' planet. Today many experts believe there is still volcanic activity bubbling under its surface.

Olympus Mons, the solar system's biggest volcano - which towers to a height of 16 miles, making it three times higher than Mount Everest - is thought to have had its last major eruption as recently as 25 million years ago.

This is far too long ago to account for any methane in the Martian atmosphere, but some scientists think the volcano, and others near it, are still geologically active.

Dr Patel stressed that searching for life on Mars was a complicated business and it would be wrong to jump to dramatic conclusions too soon.

As a result, Federation crews are constantly forced to choose between unpalatable options.

On the one hand, they can obey the directive even when it leads to clearly immoral consequences, as when the Enterprise refuses to cure a plague devastating a planet.

On the other hand, they can generate ad hoc reasons to ignore the rule, as when Captain Kirk decides that destroying a supercomputer running an alien society doesn't violate the spirit of the directive.

Of course, we shouldn't take Hollywood as a perfect guide to policy.

The Prime Directive is merely a familiar example of the universal tension between highly general moral ideals and real-world applications.

We will increasingly see the kinds of problems such tension creates in real life as technology opens up vistas beyond Earth for exploration and exploitation.

If we insist on declaring unrealistic moral ideals in our guiding documents, we should not be surprised when decision makers are forced to find ways around them.



we should of course seek compromise where possible, but to the extent that we are forced to choose whose interests to maximize, we are morally obliged to err on the side of humans. This requires grappling with the complex trade-offs and hard choices in an intellectually honest fashion, while refusing the temptation

For example, the U.S. Congress' recent move to allow asteroid mining can be seen as flying in the face of the 'collective good of mankind' ideals expressed in the Outer Space Treaty

signed by all space-faring nations.

The solution is to do the hard work of formulating the right principles, at the right level of generality, before circumstances render moral debate irrelevant.

This requires grappling with the complex trade-offs and hard choices in an intellectually honest fashion, while refusing the temptation to put forward soothing but impractical moral platitudes.

We must therefore foster thoughtful exchanges among people with very different conceptions of the moral good in order to find common ground.

It's time for that conversation to begin in earnest.

Curiosity Mars rover reveals panoramic view of red planet



Comments (79)

Take It Easy, West Midlands, United Kingdom, about 17 hours ago

If we find a planet where the sentient beings, even if it's on the same level as say dogs or cats then it's very simple. It's their world. No ifs, no buts. Microbes though? well, we're talking about life forms where further evolution isn't, has not and probably will never happen. Therefore, why not explore? Of course, I might've guessed the top rated comment on here would be the usual DM guff about PC nonsense. Pretty much par for the course.

ANYWAYUP-69, dingwall, United Kingdom, about 17 hours ago

Only if they have the capacity to complain on religious grounds.

Melody Makhir, Adelaide, Australia, about 18 hours ago

They are equals. Don't be such spacists !!!

Governator, Rochester, about 18 hours ago

Don't tell me, Merkel is planning a visit to Mars to see if there's anybody else she can let into Europe.....

js46358, A Brit in Beverly Hills, United States, about 18 hours ago

Any country that captures an alien has the responsibility of exterminating it. That is a UN law.

inanutshell, London, United Kingdom, about 18 hours ago

If only our politicians followed the Star Trek directive. Observe but do not interfere (something like that)

Chuck A, St. Somewhere, United States, about 18 hours ago

The Prime Directive states: "Nothing within these Articles Of Federation shall authorize the

United Federation of Planets to intervene in matters which are essentially the domestic jurisdiction of any planetary social system, or shall require the members to submit such matters to settlement under these Articles Of Federation. But this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII."

iOld Chap, Caribbean, Grenada, about 18 hours ago

Equal Human Rights - - - it's all in the name dummies

judgeandjury, Plymouth, United Kingdom, about 19 hours ago

This isn't Maths. Right now, there is never going to be one answer. For instance, if you asked ten people ten questions about human rights, it's unlikely you would get the same set of answers from two different people, let alone ten. Sort out our problems on Earth First..!

Asdl100, Dudley, United Kingdom, about 20 hours ago

They might as well come here and claim benefit all the other aliens have.

Da Hool, European Federation, Italy, about 20 hours ago

The question is not, "should Martians have equal rights" the question is "will we be awarded equal rights by the Martians"

Rick, Lincoln, United Kingdom, about 18 hours ago

martians most likely laugh at the conflicts religion causes on this planet.

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Sir Hans Sloane: Collector, Marmoset-Owner and Chocolate-Populariser - Medieval manuscripts blog

typepad.co.uk

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16 April 2016

by Mary Wellesley

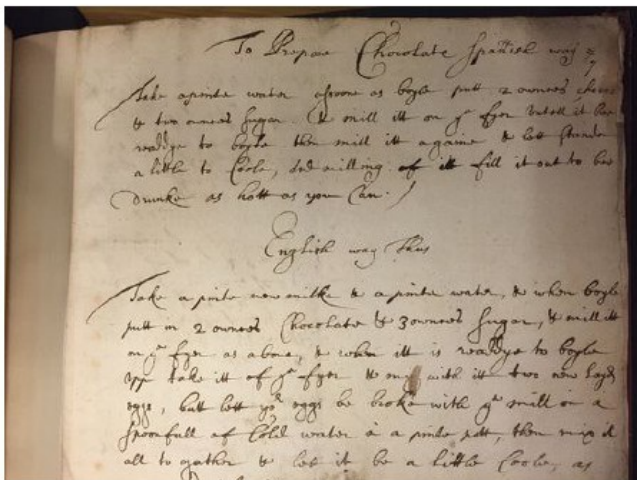


Hans_Sloane_bust res

Michael Rysbrack's bust of Hans Sloane in the British Library

Today is the anniversary of the birth of Sir Hans Sloane (b. 1660, d. 1753), whose collection of manuscripts is one of the four 'founder-collections' which established the British Museum by Act of Parliament in the year of his death, 1753. Born in Ireland, Sloane was a physician and collector, who was elected to the Royal Society at the age of just 24. Perhaps Sloane's most meaningful contribution to our national life, however, was the introduction and popularisation of Hot Chocolate in Britain. While in Jamaica with the Duke of Albermarle in the late 1680s, Sloane tried cocoa - a drink prized by local people. He found it 'nauseous' but discovered that by mixing it with milk, it became

palatable. On his return to Britain in 1689, he marketed the drink as a medicine. (That's my kind of medicine.) Amongst Sloane's papers are the notebooks of Samuel Bellingham - Sloane MS 647 - which contain two 17th century chocolate recipes.



Chocolate

Two Recipes for Chocolate: one Spanish, one English, from the notebook of Samuel Bellingham, England, 17th century, Sloane MS 647, f. 7r

In addition to his contemporary interest in medicine, Sloane also collected medieval and early modern medical manuscripts, including a beautiful 15th century Italian herbal, Sloane MS 4016 (pictured below), and treatises on gynaecology and cosmetics written by a female professor at the University of Salamanca (copied in Sloane MS 420, Sloane MS 434, Sloane MS 783, Sloane MS 1124, and Sloane MS 249).

A medieval Herbal, Italy, 15th Century, Sloane MS 4016, f. 6v

Ahead of his time, Sloane advocated inoculations, even on his own family and he believed in contributing to the public good. When he was appointed physician in charge of Christ's hospital in 1694, he returned his salary yearly to the hospital to help needy inmates. He was an avid collector, collecting not only books and manuscripts, but also - in the words of John Evelyn - 'Plants, Coralls, Minerals, Earth, shells, animals, Insects etc: collected by him with greate Judgement'. He also had an impressive array of household pets, which included a blind Arctic Fox (whose cataracts he removed), several sea turtles, a porcupine from Hudson's Bay, a one-eyed wolverine and a marmoset with overgrown incisors.



Sloane_ms_4016_f006v

Images of apothecaries from a medical treatise by John of Arderne, England, c. 1525-50, Sloane MS 6, f. 176r

On his death, Sloane left a complex will. In the words of his friend Thomas Birch, he was anxious that 'his collections might be kept together for the instruction and Benefit of others engaged in the same pursuits'. After some wrangling, his vision was achieved. When he died, Sloane's collection was integrated into three other collections: one gathered by Sir Robert Cotton and two gathered by the 1st and 2nd Earls of Oxford, known as the Harley collections. The result was the founding collection of the British Museum -- the manuscripts of which transferred to the British Library in 1973, arriving at the current St Pancras site, a beautiful Grade I listed building, in 1997.



Zodiac Man diagram, from a folding almanac, England, 1st half 15th century, Sloane MS 2250, f. 12r

Several of Sloane's manuscripts have been digitised and you can see them on our digitised manuscripts website, including a 13th century treatise on Horse Medicine, Sloane MS 745, and two physicians' folding almanacs,

Apothecaries

Sloane MS 2250 (pictured above) and Sloane MS 807.

Posted by Ancient, Medieval, and Early Modern Manuscripts at 12:02 PM

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Almanac

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Skeletal human remains found at 100-year-old music venue

May 1, 2016

yahoo.com

CINCINNATI (AP) — Workers renovating a century-old performance hall discovered human remains under the orchestra pit and now archeologists are planning to analyze the bones.

The property under Cincinnati Music Hall was a public burial ground in 1818, and bones have been popping up since construction began for the building in 1876. Workers found a skull and other bones during a major renovation in 1969.

Crews uncovered the bones while removing asbestos in late March, The Cincinnati Enquirer reported (<http://cin.ci/1MZTNA1>). Heavy excavation hasn't yet started on the venue's \$135 million renovation project.

Gray & Pape, a firm that conducts archaeological and historical investigations, concluded the arm and leg bones are believed to belong to four adult bodies.

Six other grave shafts were identified in the north carriageway, which is the space between Music Hall's main building and the North Hall. Each contained burials in wooden coffins.

The property under Music Hall was a potter's field— or a public burial ground.

A report released by the Cincinnati Center City Development Corp., the project manager for the renovation, speculated that the bones may have been moved from an original burial ground and reburied in a single grave.

Anastasia Mileham, a spokeswoman for the project manager, said remains found in the past have been re-interred at Spring Grove Cemetery in Cincinnati.

"We will likely do something similar with the human remains uncovered at Music Hall," she said.

Officials told The Enquirer they hope that analysis of the remains and historical research will reveal more clues about those who lived and were buried near the Music Hall property.

Information from: The Cincinnati Enquirer, <http://www.enquirer.com>

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Of sea monsters and cetacean weirdness – here's the skeleton of a long-finned pilot whale

kryptozoologie.net

Bestiarium

Fantastisches aus Biologie, Paläontologie und Natur



Publiziert am 19. Mai 2016 von Markus Bühler

Based on the recent discovery of an alleged „monster“ on a British beach, I decided to post a photo of a long-finned pilot whale's skeleton from the zoological museum

Hamburg. First of all, because that's exactly what this purported monster really was, a highly decomposed and already partially burned skeleton of a long-finned pilot whale (*Globicephala melaena*). It is fully beyond me why so many people somehow forget that a lot of animals have bones at the inside, and if the overlaying soft tissue decomposes, mummifies or gets eaten away by scavengers those „bones“ can become visible and the whole thing looks different from its life-appearance.

Decomposed whale carcasses have already fooled countless people, especially when the bare bones of the caudal vertebrae were visible, what appeared to many like a crocodile-like tail. Furthermore the head and skull shape of many odontocetes look very different, and even quite bulbous-headed species like belugas, orcas or pilot whales easily appear reptilian to people not familiar with their cranial anatomy. Even more so if the lips and the cheek tissue are already gone, and a surprisingly number of surprisingly big teeth is suddenly visible. But that's not the only reason why I post this photo of a long-finned pilot whale's skeleton.

It's also because this skeleton shows well just how freaky *Globicephala melaena* really is, especially when compared with its close relative, the short-finned pilot whale *Globicephala macrorhynchus* (visible on the left).

G. macrorhynchus has a quite conservative body shape, which doesn't differ that much from most other Delphinidae. But *G. melaena* has not only an extremely elongated body which looks almost a bit like something on the way to evolve into a *Basilosaurus*, it has also this enormously elongated pectoral fins with nearly wing-like finger bones.

If we would know it only from its fossils, it would probably be counted as a real weirdo, in line with *Basilosaurus*, *Odobenocetops* or *Eurhinodelphis*. However, it's not, perhaps just because it's a too familiar whale, which has long been known to many European coastal nations. Sadly we easily tend to overlook the unusual and special in animals which are



Skeleton of long-finned pilot whale at the zoological museum Hamburg

apparently too familiar or too normal.

Dieser Beitrag wurde unter Anatomie, Blogposts in English, Kryptozoologie, Wale veröffentlicht. Setze ein Lesezeichen auf den Permalink.

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Skull found near Downriver Golf Course belonged to man who died in 1919 | My Fox Spokane

myfoxspokane.com



by Luke Thoburn | @ | April 21, 2016 4:31 pm

The skull found near Downriver Golf Course on April 14th has been matched to the remains of a man who died and was interred in 1919.

He was 72-years-old at the time of his death, and died from natural causes.

A spokesman from Spokane County says his resting place had been broken into at some point, and his skull was removed. There is a criminal investigation into who broke in and stole his skull.

The skull has been reunited with the remains of the man, who will not be identified to respect the privacy of his family.

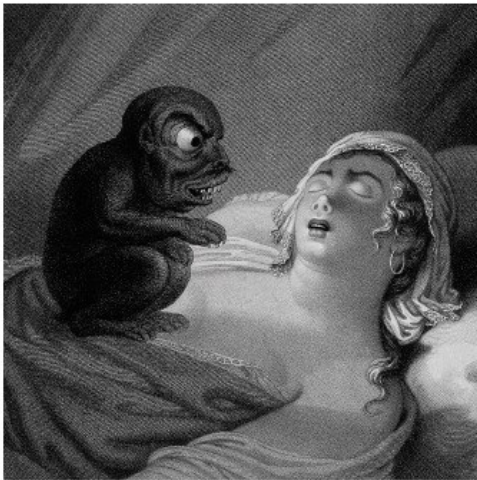
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Sleep Paralysis: A brief history of fear, treatment and artistic creativity

wellcomecollection.org

Wellcome Collection Blog



GIF from Belphegor. Phantom of the Louvre (1927) For some fascinating facts about sleep, click the image. Cochemare (Nightmare) by Jean Pierre Simon, 1810, depicting an incubus perched upon the bare breast of a woman being provoked into a terrifying dream. 'Communion' by Whitley Strieber describes an alien abduction that has all of the traits of an incident of sleep paralysis. "An essay on the incubus, or night-mare" 1753, by John Bond. Reproduction after the famous Henry Fuseli's 'The Nightmare', an image that inspired a generation of artists to explore the creative potential of this momentary occurrence.

*During sleep we enter a state of altered consciousness. While the brain remains active, our perception is largely reduced. Some sleep disorders disrupt this balance: sleepwalkers become physically active while remaining in a deep sleep and sleep paralysis can occur at the fringes of sleep. **Sarah Jaffray** takes us through the latter as she explores the stuff of nightmares.*

"...and slowly waking from it – half steeped in dreams – I opened my eyes and the before sunlit room was now wrapped in outer darkness. Instantly I felt a shock running through all my frame; nothing was to be seen and nothing was to be heard; but a supernatural hand seemed placed in mine."

– Ishmael, Chapter 4, *Moby Dick*

Today we use the term 'nightmare' to explain a generally frightening dream or unpleasant experience, but until the late 19th century the term night-mare (hyphen included) was exclusively descriptive of sleep paralysis, a sleep disorder in

which the body is temporarily immobilised at the moment of waking or the moment of falling asleep. It is a minor, yet common, body/mind malfunction that upwards of 50% of the population claims to have experienced at least once in their lifetime.

Regular bouts of sleep paralysis can be a symptom of conditions like narcolepsy or PTSD, but sometimes these conditions do not provoke sleep paralysis at all. Random occurrences of sleep paralysis typically stem from periods marked by lack of sleep, medical or anaesthetic error or high levels of stress. The unpredictability of this parasomnia makes it all the more frightening when it happens.

The Science of Sleep Paralysis



Sleep paralysis is relatively easy to explain and is (generally) not a serious condition. It occurs when brain and body are not in sync during the sleep process. During a 'normal' night's sleep we can expect the brain to dispatch a message to the nervous system that relaxes the muscles; so relaxed are they that they become inactive during sleep, protecting our body from acting out physically while in the state of sleep. As the brain is roused to a waking state (hypnopompic) or as it falls into a sleeping state (hypnagogic) the brain gives the order to end or start the paralysis.

Sleep paralysis occurs when the process happens at the wrong speed; when the brain and body are out of sync. If the brain doesn't give the order to the muscles, the muscles lay dormant while our mind is stirred to consciousness, giving us the sense of paralysis. As this liminal state persists it activates our limbic system, our centre of emotional reaction, causing fear and panic. If an individual is in the middle of a disturbing dream, this sense of fear is heightened ten-fold because there is usually a hangover that results in visual and auditory hallucination.



Although our contemporary knowledge of neuroscience demystifies sleep paralysis, its explanation does not match the extra-sensory fantastic experience of it. It's no wonder that throughout history it has been linked to paranormal forces, from demons to aliens.

Riding with the Demons

The Western concept of the nightmare is weighted with an accumulation of historical interpretations that emerged from the myth of the incubus. From ancient Mesopotamia (c. 2000

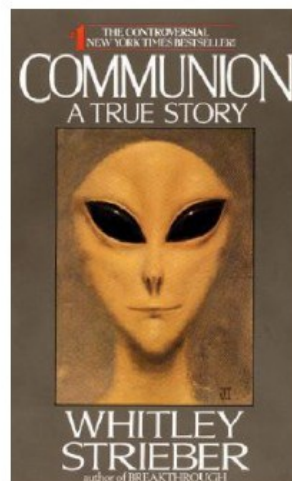
BCE) to the Roman Empire, a demon known as the *incubus* was responsible for your bad dreams. Originating from the Latin '*to sit on*', the incubus sat on top of your chest inducing horrifying dreams and physical immobility, making it the first documented explanation of sleep paralysis.



We get our term 'mare' from the Old Norse version of the incubus: the *mara*, which comes from the verb *merran* or 'crusher'. Not precisely a demon, the *mara* is a person with magical attributes who 'rides' their victim for the pleasure of pure wickedness. Grendel, the fearsome villain of the Anglo-Saxon tale *Beowulf*, is a perfect example of the *mara* crushing and devouring his prey in the dead of night. In subsequent centuries, the *mara* is shape-shifted into the Old Hag myth, which Shakespeare appropriates for his epic Queen Mab soliloquy. See the video below.

*"This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs,
That presses them and learns them first to bear,
Making them women of good carriage."*

Today, the demon of sleep paralysis has morphed again, taking the form of the alien abduction, playing upon our fear of the unknown universe that surrounds us.



Nightmarish Treatment

There is currently no prescribed treatment for sleep paralysis, but doctors suggest that making your sleep schedule regular can decrease these incidents of parasomnia. However, the earliest treatments for incubus and nightmares were sometimes as

frightening as the experience itself. The first mention of a treatment for sleep paralysis was noted by Byzantine physician Paulus Aegineta in the 7th century. In one of his seven books on the history of medicine, Paulus explains the most common way to treat the complaint was through “bleeding, drastic purgatives and friction the

extremities.” Paulus placed focus on the head as the source of the problem, suggesting that if the above treatment did not work, the cupping and scarification of the throat, a restricted diet and shaving of the head would.

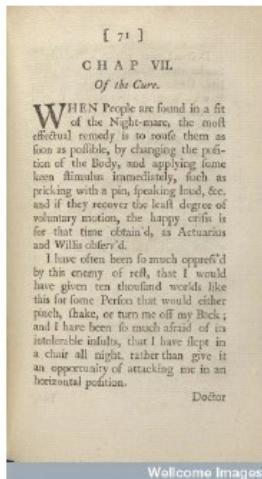
10th century Persian polymath, Akhawayni Bokhari, was the first to completely disassociate the night-mare from demonic possession in his *Learner’s Guide to Medicine (Hidayat al-Muta’allem in fi al-Tibb)*, making it a solely physical problem. A subscriber to the ancient theory of humourism, Akhawayni believed night-mare was caused by vapours of phlegm ascending from the stomach to suffocate the brain during sleep. Although his theory was different, his treatment was no different from his predecessors: bloodletting.

In the Christian era, sleep paralysis was akin to demonic possession and those afflicted were treated with prayers and exorcism. But as the Age of Enlightenment took hold, demons diminished and medical care moved towards our modern understandings of empirical observation changing the treatment of sleep paralysis.

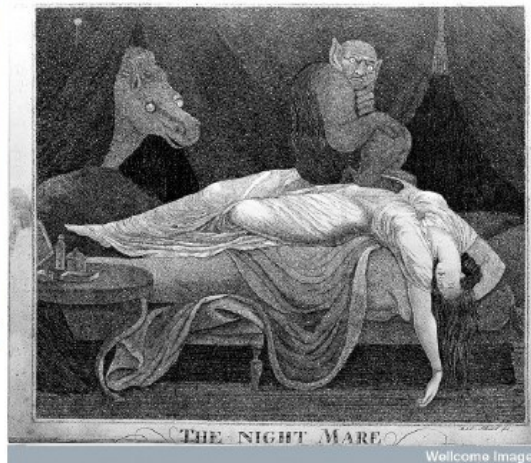
John Bond’s 1753 ‘Essay on the incubus, or night-mare’ prescribes poking the afflicted with a pin or shaking them to a wakeful state, which is perhaps the most frightening thing you could do to someone temporarily immobilised in a hallucinatory state (other than bloodletting, of course).

Creative Potential

We know what sleep paralysis is and we know how to treat it, but it still scares us. What is most fascinating is that sleep paralysis occurs when the mind has complete control: the body’s senses are restricted and the imagination has almost complete reign. If we orient ourselves through touch, fine-tuned hearing and clear



sight, what happens when all of those things are at the mercy of the misfiring of our brain?



Sleep paralysis is the immediate experience of the depths of uncontrolled consciousness. It allows the mind to stretch beyond the logical frames of existence, blurring the boundaries of waking and dreaming life, making it a valuable tool for artists throughout the centuries. The experience of sleep paralysis allows us to understand the power of unbridled imagination ('mare' pun intended). This is the very reason that the study of sleep paralysis is also the study of cultural storytelling. From the novel to visual art, from theatre to music, sleep paralysis has been used to evoke the drama of an unfettered imagination and the dark recesses of the mind.

The experience of sleep paralysis not only alters the consciousness of an individual at the moment of

waking or descending into sleep, but it has made a lasting impression on our perception of reality in Western culture. For more on what filters our consciousness (including sleep paralysis) come and see our exhibition 'States of Mind' (on until 16 October 2016).

Sarah is a Visitor Experience Assistant at Wellcome Collection.

7 thoughts on "Sleep Paralysis: A brief history of fear, treatment and artistic creativity"

1. Excellent piece, fascinating links, but please note that the meanings of 'hypnagogic' and 'hypnopompic' have been confused.

Paul Broks , 12 May, 2016 at 9:46 am

2. Now corrected, I see!

Paul Broks , 12 May, 2016 at 1:52 pm

- Yes, thanks for pointing out that oversight

😊 Russell Dornan , 12 May, 2016 at 1:57 pm

3. How long is it on for?

Paul Moore , 13 May, 2016 at 1:52 pm

- Our exhibition States of Mind is on until 16 October 2016

😊 Russell Dornan , 16 May, 2016 at 11:05 am

- Thanks. Hoping to go tomorrow

Paul Moore , 16 May, 2016 at 11:11 am

4. I have experiences in sleep paralysis. I also figured out a fast way to wake up during that status. Sleep paralysis might be a way linking to the lucid dream, in which you know you are in a dream, such that the dream is under your control.

Wei Pan , 14 May, 2016 at 4:18 am

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UK airport sniffer dogs good at finding sausages, but not drugs

April 14, 2016

yahoo.com



A police dog handler talks with a colleague as his sniffer dog waits outside the GMEX (Greater Manchester Exhibition centre) in Manchester, northern England, September 21, 2006. REUTERS/Phil Noble

LONDON (Reuters) - A team of sniffer dogs set up at a British airport at a cost of 1.25 million pounds (\$1.7 million) have proved adept at discovering small amounts of cheese

and sausages but not so good at finding smuggled drugs, a report said on Thursday.

An inspection of border security at Manchester Airport in northern England found that during a seven-month period, the six dogs had failed to find any illegal class A drugs, those considered the most dangerous such as heroin or cocaine.

"The deterrent effect of the detection dogs was difficult to measure, but seizures alone represented a low return on investment, given 1.25 million spent on new kennels and the costs of operating the unit," said the report by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration.

Each dog has its own speciality in detecting goods such as drugs, tobacco, cash and meat being illegally brought into the airport by the 22 million passengers who use it annually.

However the report found that although the sniffers had helped customs seize 46 kg of cigarettes and 181 kg of meat, they had uncovered no class A drugs between November 2014 and June 2015 even though this was a "very high" priority.

It said one dog trained to find smuggled animal products had made "multiple accurate detections, but most were of small amounts of cheese or sausages, wrongly brought back by returning British holidaymakers and posing minimal risk to UK public health".

Managers are now examining how better to deploy the dogs, the report said.

(Reporting by Michael Holden; editing by Stephen Addison)

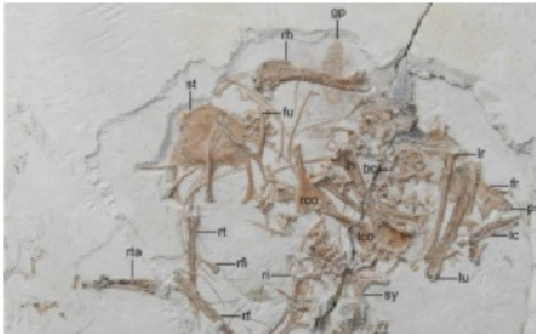
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There's Something Fishy about This Fossil Bird

scientificamerican.com

Prehistoric puke reveals what some toothed birds were eating

• By Brian Switek on May 2, 2016



Birds used to have teeth. From the Jurassic time of *Archaeopteryx* – the first bird – until the mass extinction that closed the Cretaceous 66 million years ago, toothy birds flew through the air and swam through the seas. Depending on your feelings about the feathered creatures this fact might seem amazing, frightening, or something out of a dream journal, but, regardless, the fossil record is clear that grinning birds thrived for over 84 million years alongside their more imposing dinosaurian relatives. But what did these enamel-bearing avians eat? A new fossil offers some partially-digested clues.

The 120-million-year-old bird, found from the Jehol fossil beds in Liaoning Province, China, isn't as immediately beautiful as other articulated, fluffy fossils found in the same deposit. The tan bones of the as-yet-unnamed bird are a little jumbled, but their anatomy show that this was an enantiornithine - one of the toothed birds, distinct from the ancestors of today's beaked flyers. But what makes this fossil particularly noteworthy, paleontologist Min Wang and colleagues report, is a smattering of fish bones wrapped up in a neat little prehistoric package.

The piscine remains are in a "spindle-shaped cluster" beneath the right humerus, the researchers write, and appear to be a packed-down pellet of indigestible tidbits that the Cretaceous bird vomited around the time it perished. In other words, these seem to be gut contents - one of just two fossils that indicate some of the enantiornithine birds ate fish.

Ancient fishy vomit dovetails* with another study on prehistoric birds that came out last month. Paleontologist Derek Larson and his colleagues determined that teeth might have been a liability a massive asteroid struck the Earth 66 million years ago. Dinosaurs with teeth - enantiornithines included - largely relied on catching and rending live prey, like fish. The ancestors of modern birds, on the other wing, were toothless and subsisted on seeds. So when the world was thrown into ashen chaos, the toothed dinosaurs had only meager pickings with beaked birds still had a store of seeds to get them through the tough times.

Even though the new Jehol bird lived tens of millions of years before the disaster, the prehistoric flyer still reinforces the view that toothy biters enjoyed a glut of meaty food until chance dealt them a bum hand. Had it not been for that chunk of extraterrestrial rock, birds that smile might still be alive today.

*I'm not sorry. The pun was right there.

Reference:

Wang, M., Zhou, Z., Sullivan, C. 2016. A fish-eating enantiornithine bird from the Early Cretaceous of China provides evidence of modern avian digestive features. *Current Biology*. doi: 10.1016/j.cub.2016.02.055

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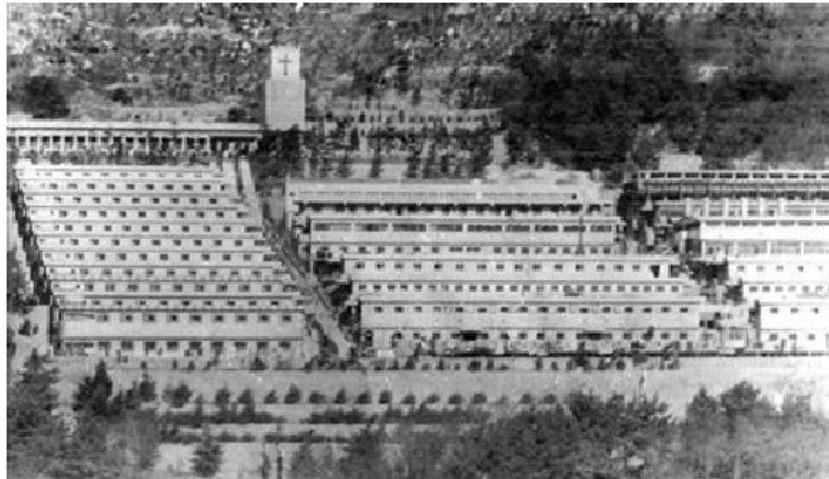
AP: S. Korea covered up mass abuse, killings of 'vagrants'

ap.org

<http://bigstory.ap.org/urn:publicid:ap.org:c22de3a565fe4e85a0508bbbd72c3c1b>

By KIM TONG-HYUNG and FOSTER KLUG

Apr. 19, 2016 9:14 PM EDT

*South Korea Tortured Children*

This undated photo shows the Brothers Home compound in Busan, South Korea. An Associated Press... Read more

By: KIM TONG-HYUNG (AP), FOSTER KLUG (AP)
 BUSAN, South Korea
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35.1028129.04

BUSAN, South Korea (AP) — The 14-year-old boy in the black school jacket stared at his sneakers, his heart pounding, as the policeman accused him of stealing a piece of bread.

Even now, more than 30 years later, Choi Seung-woo weeps when he describes all that happened next. The policeman yanked down the boy's pants and sparked a cigarette lighter near Choi's genitals until he confessed to a crime he didn't commit. Then two men with clubs came and dragged Choi off to the Brothers Home, a mountainside institution where some of the worst human rights atrocities in modern South Korean history took place.

A guard in Choi's dormitory raped him that night in 1982 — and the next, and the next. So began five hellish years of slave labor and near-daily assaults, years in which Choi saw men and women beaten to death, their bodies carted away like garbage.

Choi was one of thousands — the homeless, the drunk, but mostly children and the disabled — rounded up off the streets ahead of the 1988 Seoul Olympics, which the ruling dictators saw as international validation of South Korea's arrival as a modern country. An Associated Press investigation shows that the abuse of these so-called vagrants at Brothers, the largest of dozens of such facilities, was much more vicious and widespread than previously known, based on hundreds of exclusive documents and dozens of interviews with officials and former inmates.

Yet nobody has been held accountable to date for the rapes and killings at the Brothers compound because of a cover-up orchestrated at the highest levels of government, the AP found. Two early attempts to investigate were suppressed by senior officials who went on to thrive in high-profile jobs; one remains a senior adviser to the current ruling party. Products made using slave labor at Brothers were sent to Europe, Japan and possibly beyond, and the family that owned the institution continued to run welfare facilities and schools until just two years ago.

Even as South Korea prepares for its second Olympics, in 2018, thousands of traumatized former inmates have still received no compensation, let alone public recognition or an apology. The few who

now speak out want a new investigation.

The current government, however, refuses to revisit the case, and is blocking a push by an opposition lawmaker to do so on the grounds that the evidence is too old.

Ahn Jeong-tae, an official from Seoul's Ministry of the Interior, said focusing on just one human rights incident would financially burden the government and set a bad precedent. The Brothers' victims, he said, should have submitted their case to a temporary truth-finding commission established in the mid-2000s to investigate past atrocities.

"We can't make separate laws for every incident and there have been so many incidents since the Korean War," Ahn said.

Former inmates, however, cannot forget. One spent months standing quietly in front of the National Assembly with a signboard demanding justice. Choi has attempted suicide several times and now attends weekly therapy sessions.

"The government has consistently tried to bury what happened. How do you fight that? If we spoke up, who would have heard us?" he asked. "I am wailing, desperate to tell our story. Please listen to us."

"HELL WITHIN A HELL"

Once an orphanage, Brothers Home at its peak had more than 20 factories churning out woodwork, metalwork, clothing, shoes and other goods made by mostly unpaid inmates. The sprawling compound of concrete buildings rose above the southern port city of Busan, its inmates hidden from view by tall walls and kept there by guards who carried bats and patrolled with dogs.

The horrors that happened behind those walls are inextricably linked to South Korea's modern history.

The country at the time was still recovering from the near-total devastation of the 1950-53 Korean War, which followed nearly four decades of brutal Japanese colonization. From the 1960s until the '80s, before democracy, it was ruled by military dictators who focused overwhelmingly on improving the economy.

In 1975, dictator President Park Chung-hee, father of current President Park Geun-hye, issued a directive to police and local officials to "purify" city streets of vagrants. Police officers, assisted by shop owners, rounded up panhandlers, small-time street merchants selling gum and trinkets, the disabled, lost or unattended children, and dissidents, including a college student who'd been holding anti-government leaflets.

They ended up as prisoners at 36 nationwide facilities. By 1986, the number of inmates had jumped over five years from 8,600 to more than 16,000, according to government documents obtained by AP.

Nearly 4,000 were at Brothers. But about 90 percent of them didn't even meet the government's definition of "vagrant" and therefore shouldn't have been confined there, former prosecutor Kim Yong Won told the AP, based on Brothers' records and interviews compiled before government officials ended his investigation.

The inner workings of Brothers are laid bare by former inmate Lee Chae-sik, who had extraordinary access as personal assistant to the man in charge of enforcing the rules. The AP independently verified many of the details provided by Lee, now 46, through government documents.

Lee was sent to Brothers at 13 after trouble at school. His first job was in a medical ward. Twice a day, Lee and four others, none of whom had medical training, would try to care for patients, often dousing their open wounds with disinfectant or removing maggots with tweezers.

"People screamed in pain, but we couldn't do much," Lee said. "It was a hell within a hell. The patients had been left there to die."

Stronger inmates raped and beat the weak and stole their food, he said. Lee attempted suicide after a guard at the medical ward raped him.

A year later, he was made personal assistant to chief enforcer Kim Kwang-seok, who like other guards at Brothers was an inmate raised to power by the owner because of his loyalty. Many former inmates remember Kim as the facility's most feared man. The AP tried repeatedly to track Kim down but could not find him.

Lee said he was present when Kim, a short, stocky man with sunburned skin, led near-daily, often fatal beatings at the compound's "corrections room." Lee accompanied Kim as he compiled a twice-a-day tally of the sick and dead for the owner; four or five daily deaths were often on the list.

A scene recounted by Lee provides a firsthand account of the efficient, almost casually evil way the facility worked. One morning, Kim approached owner Park In-keun on his daily jog to report that yet another inmate had been beaten to death the night before. The boy heard Park order Kim to bury the body in the hills behind the compound's walls.

MONEY FROM SLAVES

The violence at Brothers happened in the shadow of a massive money-making operation partly based on slave labor. The factories were ostensibly meant to train inmates for future jobs. But by the end of 1986, Brothers saw a profit from 11 of them, according to Busan city government documents obtained exclusively by the AP.

The documents show that Brothers should have paid the current equivalent of \$1.7 million to more than 1,000 inmates for their dawn-to-dusk work over an unspecified period. However, facility records and interviews with inmates at the time suggest that, instead, most of the nearly 4,000 people at Brothers were subject to forced labor without pay, according to prosecutor Kim.

Another probe at the time, quickly scrapped by the government, showed that "nearly none" of about 100 inmates interviewed received payment. None of 20 former inmates interviewed by the AP received money while at Brothers either, though three got small payments later.

Adults worked on construction jobs, both at Brothers and off-site. Children sometimes hauled dirt and built walls, but mostly they assembled ballpoint pens and fishing hooks.

Some products were tied to other countries. For example, dress shirts made at Brothers' sewing factory were sent to Europe, and inmates were trained by employees at Daewoo, a major clothing exporter during the 1980s to the United States and other markets, according to the owner's autobiography. Park, the owner, said officials from Daewoo had toured the facility before offering a partnership. Daewoo International spokesman Kim Jin-ho said it was impossible to confirm such details because of a lack of records from the time.

Inmates during the 1970s recounted spending long hours tying fishing lines to hooks for packages with Japanese writing on them, for export to Japan.

Kim Hee-gon, an inmate at Brothers for eight years, said he and his colleagues were beaten severely in the early 1970s after thousands of such packages shipped to Japan were returned because they were faulty or missing hooks. Park Gyeong-bo, who was confined at Brothers from 1975 to 1980, remembered sneaker bottoms produced with the logo of Kukje Sangsa, a now-defunct company that manufactured shoes for the United States and Europe in the 1970s and 80s.

The operation thrived because everybody benefited, except the inmates.

Local officials needed somewhere to put the vagrants they were charged with corralling, so each year they renewed a contract with Brothers that required an inspection of how the inmates were treated and of how the facility was financially managed. Brothers got government subsidies based on its number of inmates, so it pushed police to round up more vagrants, the early probe found. And police officers were often promoted depending on how many vagrants they picked up.

Two Busan city officials would say only that the facts are difficult to confirm now because the facility closed three decades ago. Heo Gwi-yong, a spokesman for the Busan Metropolitan Police Agency, said he couldn't confirm any details for the same reason.

The owner of Brothers, Park, received two state medals for social welfare achievements and sat on a government advisory panel. His version of his story even inspired a 1985 television drama about a man's heroic devotion to caring for what were called "bottom-life people."

Park eventually served a short prison stint for embezzlement and other relatively minor charges, but not for the abuse at Brothers. When the facility was at last raided in 1987, investigators found a vault in Park's office filled with the current equivalent of about \$5 million in U.S. and Japanese currencies and certificates of deposit.

In his autobiography, in court hearings and in talks with close associates, Park has denied wrongdoing and maintained that he simply followed government orders. Repeated attempts to contact him through family, friends and activists were unsuccessful.

The AP, however, tracked down the former second-highest management official at Brothers, Lim Young-soon, who bristled in a telephone interview at descriptions of corruption, violence and slavery at the facility. Lim, a Protestant pastor now in Australia who is the brother of Park's wife, said Park was a "devoted" social worker who made Busan better by cleaning its streets of troublemakers. He said Brothers' closure "damaged national interests."

Lim acknowledged beating deaths at Brothers, but said they were caused by clashes between inmates. He attributed the facility's high death toll to the many inmates he said arrived there in poor physical and mental health.

"These were people who would have died in the streets anyway," Lim said.

"I DIDN'T LIVE AS A HUMAN"

While Park raked in the money, the death toll mounted and the inmates struggled to survive.

On his second day at Brothers, still dazed from his brutal rape the night before, Choi waited with other children to be stripped and washed. He said he watched a guard drag a woman by her hair and then beat her with a club until blood flowed from her head.

"I just stood there, trembling like a leaf," Choi, 46, said. "I couldn't even scream when the platoon leader later raped me again."

Another time, Choi recalled, he saw seven guards knock down a screaming man, cover him with a blue blanket and stomp and beat him. Blood seeped through the blanket. When it fell away, the dead man's eyes had rolled back into his head.

Death tallies compiled by the facility claimed 513 people died between 1975 and 1986; the real toll was almost certainly higher. Prosecutor Kim interviewed multiple inmates who said facility officials refused to send people to hospitals until they were nearly dead for fear of escape.

"The facility was Park's kingdom, and violence was how he ruled," Kim said of the owner. "When you are confined to a place where people are getting beaten to death every day, you aren't likely to complain too

much about forced labor, abuse or getting raped."

Most of the new arrivals at Brothers were in relatively good health, government documents show. Yet at least 15 inmates were dead within just a month of arrival in 1985, and 22 in 1986.

Of the more than 180 documented deaths at Brothers in 1985 and 1986, 55 of the death certificates were issued by a single doctor, Chung Myung-kuk, according to internal facility documents, interviews and records compiled by Kim. Chung, now dead, mostly listed the cause of death as "heart failure" and "general weakness."

Life at Brothers began before dawn, as inmates washed and got ready for mandatory 5:30 a.m. prayers, transmitted by loudspeaker from the facility's Presbyterian church. After a morning run, they ate breakfast and then headed to factories or construction sites.

When city officials, foreign missionaries or aid workers visited, a select group of healthy inmates worked for hours to prepare a sanitized version of Brothers for the guests. Guards locked everyone else in their dormitories. Choi said inmates watched hopelessly as these clueless do-gooders trooped through.

"We were trapped in a prison. But who could help us? No one," Choi said.

Once the doors were locked at 6 p.m., Choi said, the guards unleashed "uncontrolled violence" upon the 60 to 100 kids in his dormitory, including frequent rapes.

A principal at a Busan school who once taught at Brothers acknowledged that inmates were held against their will, and even called the facility a massive concentration camp. However, the principal, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was worried about his reputation, staunchly defended its practices. He said severe violence and military-style discipline were the only ways to run a place filled with thousands of unruly people who didn't want to be there.

Park Sun-yi, who had been snatched by police at age 9 from a Busan train station in 1980, was one of the few to escape.

She had watched as the guards reserved their most ruthless beatings, the kind where inmates sometimes didn't recover, for those who tried to run. But after five years, she said, she became "consumed with the thought that my life might be like this forever and that I might die here."

She and five other girls used a broken saw from the ironwork factory to file away bars on a second-floor window at night, little by little, reattaching them with gum each morning. At last, they squeezed themselves out, scaled a wall embedded with broken glass and fled into the hills.

When she finally walked through the door of her family home in Munsan, she said, her father fainted.

"JUST WAITING TO DIE"

The unraveling of Brothers began by accident.

While pheasant hunting, Kim, then a newly appointed prosecutor in the city of Ulsan, heard from his guide about men with wooden bats and large dogs guarding bedraggled prisoners on a nearby mountain. When they drove there, the men said they were building a ranch for the owner of the Brothers Home in nearby Busan. Kim knew immediately, he said, that he'd stumbled onto "a very serious crime."

On a frigid January evening in 1987, Kim led 10 policemen in a surprise raid past the facility's high walls, imposing steel gates and gape-mouthed guards. Inside, he found battered and malnourished inmates locked in overcrowded dormitories. The inmates gave the unexpected visitors crisp, military-style salutes.

"I remember thinking, 'This isn't a welfare facility; it's a concentration camp,'" Kim, now 61 and a

managing partner at a Seoul law firm, said. People lay coughing and moaning in a squalid sick ward, "just waiting to die."

After the owner was arrested, he demanded a meeting with Kim's boss, the chief Busan prosecutor, who then supervised Ulsan. A day later, Busan Mayor Kim Joo-ho, who died in 2014, called Kim to plead for Park's release. Kim said he politely declined and hung up.

At every turn, Kim said, high-ranking officials blocked his investigation, in part out of fear of an embarrassing international incident on the eve of the Olympics. President Chun Doo-hwan, who took power in a coup after Park Chung-hee was assassinated, didn't need another scandal as he tried to fend off huge pro-democracy protests.

Internal prosecution records reveal several instances where Kim noted intense pressure from Chun's office to curb his probe and push for lighter punishment for the owner. Kim had to reassure presidential officials directly and regularly that his investigation wouldn't expand.

Park Hee-tae, then Busan's head prosecutor and later the nation's justice minister, relentlessly pushed to reduce the scope of the investigation, Kim said, including forcing him to stop his efforts to interview every inmate at Brothers. Park, a senior adviser to the current ruling party, has repeatedly denied AP interview requests. His personal secretary said Park can't remember details about the investigation.

Despite interference, Kim eventually collected bank records and financial transactions indicating that, in 1985 and 1986 alone, the owner of Brothers embezzled what would be the current equivalent of more than \$3 million. That came from about \$10 million of government subsidies meant to feed and clothe the inmates and maintain the facilities. However, Kim said, the chief Busan prosecutor forced Kim to list the embezzlement as nearly half the amount he had actually found so that a life sentence couldn't be pursued under the law at the time.

Kim said his bosses also prevented him from charging the owner, Park, or anyone else for the suspected widespread abuse at the Brothers compound, and limited the prosecutor to pursuing much narrower abuse linked to the construction site Kim found while hunting.

Kim demanded a 15-year prison term for Park. After a lengthy battle, the Supreme Court in 1989 gave Park 2½ years in prison for embezzlement and violations of construction, grassland management and foreign currency laws. He was acquitted of charges linked to off-site abuse. Only two guards received prison terms, one for 1½ years and another for eight months.

After prison, Park continued to earn money from welfare facilities and land sales. The Brothers site was purchased in 2001 by a construction company for what would now be about \$27 million, according to a copy of the land sale shown to the AP. One of Park's daughters operated a school for troubled kids that closed in 2013. His family in 2014 sold a home for the severely disabled.

UNFORGETTABLE PAIN

The legacy of Brothers lingers.

It finally closed its gates in 1988. In the 1990s, construction laborers dug up about 100 human bones on the patch of mountain just outside where it stood, according to one of the workers who found the bones, Lee Jin-seob. Blankets covering the bones and the lack of burial mounds made Lee think they'd been buried informally and quickly. It's unclear what happened to the remains.

On a recent trip to the site, which is now covered with tall apartment buildings, ex-inmates Choi and Lee Chae-sik stood on a concrete-covered former water reservoir that they think is the only remaining physical trace of Brothers. Both recalled the sight of guards carrying corpses into the woods.

"There could be hundreds of bodies still out there," Lee said, pointing toward the steep slopes.

Inmates released from the facility ended up homeless and in shelters and mental institutions; many struggle with alcoholism, depression, rage, shame and poverty. Choi, whose back is covered by a large tattoo from his time in a gang after he left Brothers, was imprisoned for assaulting a policeman.

The few former inmates who have begun speaking out want justice: an apology and an admission that officials encouraged police to kidnap and lock away people who shouldn't have been confined.

"How can we ever forget the pain from the beatings, the dead bodies, the backbreaking labor, the fear ... all the bad memories," Lee, who now manages a lakeside motel, said. "It will haunt us until we die."

AP News | © 2015 Associated Press |

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Spain's cursed village of witches

By Inka Piegsa-Quischotte 27 April 2016

bbc.com



This tiny village has been excommunicated, and cursed with a spell so powerful that only the Pope can lift it.

How does a tiny Spanish village of just 62 souls come to be excommunicated in its entirety and cursed with a spell so strong that only the Pope can lift it?

To find out more about this bizarre story of witchcraft, superstition, revenge, envy and power, I headed to the village of Trasmoz, nested in the foothills of the snow-covered Moncayo mountain range in Aragon. Trasmoz has centuries of witchcraft history, and I'd arranged to meet Lola Ruiz Diaz, a local modern-day witch, to learn the truth. As I waited for her in the freezing-cold hall of the half-ruined 12th-century Trasmoz Castle, perched on a hilltop above the village, I shivered in anticipation.



Once home to 10,000 inhabitants, Trasmoz now has just 62 (Credit: Credit: Teresa Esteban/Getty)

Once home to 10,000 inhabitants, Trasmoz now has just 62 (Credit: Teresa Esteban/Getty)

Ruiz, custodian of the castle, greeted me with a broad smile. She had grey hair, green eyes, chic clothes and a laptop under her arm – a far cry from the crystal balls, black candles and Tarot cards I'd been envisaging. The only things that seemed remotely witch-like about her outfit

were her earrings – dangling small gold owls with little feathers attached – and the gold amulets around her neck.

"The whole saga of witchcraft in Trasmoz starts here, at this castle," she explained. "During the 13th Century, the castle occupants dedicated their time to forging fake coins. And to keep the people of Trasmoz from investigating all that scraping and hammering, they spread a rumour that witches and sorcerers were rattling chains and forging cauldrons to boil magic potions at night. It worked, and Trasmoz was forever associated with witchcraft."

In the 13th Century, Trasmoz castle was rumoured to be a haven for witchcraft and black magic (Credit: Juanje 2712/Wikipedia)

Ruiz explained that at this time Trasmoz was a thriving community and powerful fiefdom, full of iron and silver mines and vast wood and water reserves. It was also lay territory, which meant it didn't belong to the surrounding Catholic dominion of the Church, and by royal



In the 13th Century, Trasmoz castle was rumoured to be a haven for witchcraft and black magic (Credit: Credit: Juanje 2712/Wikipedia)

decree didn't have to pay dues or taxes to the nearby monastery of Veruela – a fact that angered the Church. So when rumours of Trasmoz as a haven for witchcraft started to spread beyond the village boundaries, the abbot of Veruela seized his opportunity to punish the population, requesting that the archbishop of Tarazona, the biggest nearby town, excommunicate the entire village. This meant that they

weren't allowed to go to confession or take the holy sacraments at the Catholic church.

The wealthy community of Trasmoz, a mix of Jews, Christians and Arabs, didn't repent – which would have been the only way to remove the excommunication. The disputes with Veruela continued for many years, finally coming to a head when the monastery started diverting water from the village instead of paying for it. In response, Pedro Manuel Ximenez de Urrea, the Lord of Trasmoz, took up arms against the monastery. But before an outright war could erupt, the matter was taken up by King Ferdinand II, who decided that Trasmoz's actions were justified.



The abbot at Veruela Abbey excommunicated Trasmoz after hearing rumours of witchcraft (Credit: Credit: Emvallmitjana/Wikipedia)

The abbot at Veruela Abbey excommunicated Trasmoz after hearing rumours of witchcraft (Credit: Emvallmitjana/Wikipedia)

The Church never forgave the defeat, and – with the explicit permission of Pope Julius II – cast a curse over the village in 1511 by chanting psalm 108 of the Book of Psalms – the most powerful tool the Church possesses to pronounce a curse. They

alleged that Pedro Manuel and the people of Trasmoz had been blinded by witchcraft, and since the curse was sanctioned by the Pope, only a Pope has the power to lift it. None have done so to this day.

The years that followed were not easy for Trasmoz. The castle burned to the ground in 1520 and remained in ruins for centuries. After the Jews were expelled from Spain in the 15th

Century, Trasmoz fell into decline, from about 10,000 inhabitants to a population of just 62, only half of which live here permanently. The village today has no shops, no school and only one bar. Many houses are in disrepair and the streets are mostly empty.



*The village of Trasmoz is surrounded the snow-capped Moncayo mountains
(Credit: Credit: Miguel Ángel García/Flickr)*

The village of Trasmoz is surrounded the snow-capped Moncayo mountains (Credit: Miguel Ángel García/Flickr)

Back in the castle, Ruiz led me down the steep steps of the tower, which has been restored to house a tiny witchcraft museum and a collection of black magic paraphernalia such as brooms, black crucifixes and cauldrons. Crossing the courtyard, we came to a

platform dominated by a wrought-iron sculpture of a woman. "This is La Tia Casca, the last witch to be killed in Trasmoz, in 1860," Ruiz said. "A deadly epidemic had broken out and neither cure nor explanation was found. So they blamed La Tia Casca, as she was thought to be strange and secretive. They rounded her up and threw her into a deep well, on top of which we are actually standing."

La Tia Casca may have been the last witch to be killed in Trasmoz, but the tradition of witchcraft seems to be alive and well in the Spanish village. Every June, during the Feria de Brujería festival, a market sells lotions and potions made from the healing and hallucinogenic herbs and plants that grow in the surrounding Moncayo mountains. Actors re-enact historical scenes, such as the rounding up and torture of presumed witches. And one lucky person gets named as the Witch of the Year. Ruiz, who lives permanently in Trasmoz, is the latest.

"What do you have to do to qualify as Witch of the Year?" I asked.

"Obviously, you have to have a knowledge of herbal medicine," Ruiz replied, "but, most importantly, you have to be involved in the history and promotion of all things connected with Trasmoz. To be a witch today is a badge of honour."

"Can you cast a spell?" I finally blurted out .

The half-ruined 12th-century Trasmoz Castle is perched on a hilltop above the village (Credit: Julio Alvarez German/Getty)

For the first time, Ruiz's easy smile disappeared. Seconds later, it was back. "Casting a spell? No, but I make a special liquid from sage and rosemary that you splash around you. People tell me it lifts depression, and that their streak of misfortune comes to an end as soon as they started using the liquid. Of course," she added, "you have to believe in it, otherwise it won't



The half-ruined 12th-century Trasmoz Castle is perched on a hilltop above the village (Credit: Credit: Julio Alvarez German/Getty)

work.”

It was getting late, and the sun had begun to set, casting the ragged ruins and restored tower of Trasmoz into relief as the light disappeared behind the peaks of the Moncayo mountains. With that view – and a tiny bottle of Diaz’s herbal concoction in my hand – it was easy to fall under the village’s magical spell. Perhaps there really was witchcraft here.

I’d brought with me a few grains of rice and a little sachet of salt – both time-honoured remedies to ward off evil spirits . As I turned my back on the village, I threw them over my shoulder. Just in case.

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Russian medieval reenactor takes out drone with spear throw

upi.com



Russian medieval reenactor takes out drone with spear throw

By Ben Hooper | May 12, 2016 at 1:47 PM



A medieval reenactor throws a spear at a drone. Screenshot: Gennady Tolcheev/YouTube

LIPETSK, Russia, May 12 (UPI) -- A Russian medieval festival reenactor showed off his spear-throwing skills by knocking a camera drone out of the sky with his weapon.

Footage posted to YouTube by drone owner Gennady Tolcheev shows an aerial view of the Rusborg medieval festival in the Lipetsk region as reenactors

are preparing to recreate the "battle for the bridge."

A costumed participant can be seen moving away from his comrades before throwing his spear, which scores a direct hit and knocks the drone out of the air.

"The lance was not a fighting weapon, it had a softened tip," a festival organizer told the Rossiyskaya Gazeta newspaper. "Therefore the quadcopter was not destroyed, it just dropped to the ground."

Social media users criticized the drone's presence at the event, which even bans participants from wearing modern underwear, but Tolcheev said organizers gave permission for the quadcopter to film.

Tolcheev said the man who threw the spear apologized and offered to pay for repairs to the damaged device.

The drone owner said he has spoken to organizers about the possibility of making drone spearing an official event next year, with the aerial devices standing in for "dragons."

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Prosecutor: N. Seattle stabber told cops he was Jesus Christ

BY LEVI PULKKINEN, SEATTLEPI.COM STAFF

Published 10:22 am, Thursday, May 12, 2016

seattlepi.com

 <http://www.seattlepi.com/local/crime/article/Prosecutor-N-Seattle-stabber-told-cops-he-was-7464635.php>

Phinney Ridge man accused of stabbing neighbors after years of harassment, erratic behavior

A North Seattle man now accused of stabbing two neighbors had harassed one of them for years, prosecutors say.

Filing charges Wednesday, King County prosecutors claim John Christopher Altshuler attacked two of his Phinney Ridge neighbors after threatening one repeatedly. Altshuler has been jailed since the Sunday afternoon incident, and now faces felony assault charges.

According to charging papers, Altshuler, 58, made nonsensical statements to police following his arrest Sunday.

"When the defendant was finally arrested in this case, he told the arresting officer that he was Jesus Christ, but he was not bolted to the cross, and he stated that many virgins wanted to get impregnated by him," Senior Deputy Prosecutor Jennifer Worley said in court papers.

Worley noted that Altshuler does not appear to have ever received treatment for mental health issues or substance abuse. Altshuler's behavior, the prosecutor said, raises "the obvious concern" that Altshuler is unwell.

Shortly before 4 p.m., Seattle police were called to the 300 block of Northwest 74th Street following a report of a fight.

Writing the court, a detective said investigators learned Altshuler stabbed one of his neighbors with an ice pick after the other man confronted him for slashing his tires. The other man had armed himself with a metal bar.

Altshuler then stabbed a second man, the detective continued, who tried to talk him into dropping the weapon.

Medics transported the injured men to Northwest Medical Center, where they were treated for non-life threatening stab wounds. One of the men narrowly avoided a more serious injury after the pick glanced off one of his ribs.

Police surrounded Altshuler's home for 35 minutes before he surrendered, the detective said.

Altshuler's family told officers he suffered a brain injury 30 years ago. His mental state, they said, has been declining since.

Police and prosecutors describe a long history of conflict between Altshuler and the first

neighbor he is alleged to have attacked. Altshuler is said to have made outrageous statements about that man and his wife, and threatened them repeatedly.

In the days before the stabbings, Altshuler cut the family's phone line, slashed the tires of their cars and poured syrup into the gas tank of one vehicle, the detective said in charging papers. Investigators claim surveillance video showed Altshuler approaching the home in violation of a 2014 court order.

Altshuler's "conduct over the years has been harassing, intimidating, brazen and now violent," Worley said in charging papers. "The victims and witnesses involved in this case live in a residential neighborhood that has been plagued by the defendant's conduct."

Altshuler has been charged with two counts of second-degree assault, as well as counts of third-degree malicious mischief and violation of an anti-harassment order. He remains jailed on \$250,000 bail and is expected to appear May 25 for arraignment at King County Superior Court in Seattle.

Seattlepi.com reporter Levi Pulkkinen can be reached at 206-448-8348 or levipulkkinen@seattlepi.com. Follow Levi on Twitter at twitter.com/levipulk.

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Woman seen in Texas funeral home video stealing rings off corpse

April 11, 2016

yahoo.com

<https://www.yahoo.com/news/woman-seen-texas-funeral-home-video-stealing-rings-223131363.html?nhp=1>

AUSTIN, Texas (Reuters) - Police in west Texas are searching for a woman seen in a surveillance video at a funeral home in Odessa stealing a ring from the body of an 88-year-old in an open casket.

In a video posted on the Facebook page of the Odessa Police Department on Monday, the suspect is seen standing alone in front of the body of an elderly woman for about a minute on Friday and apparently twisting the woman's finger to remove a ring.

<https://www.facebook.com/Odessa-Police-Department-824628704293521/>

Police said after stealing the ring, the suspect fled in a car.

The daughter of the woman, whose funeral was scheduled for Monday, told the Odessa American newspaper the family did not know the suspect.

(Reporting by Jon Herskovitz; Editing by Dan Grebler)

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Suicidal Man Posts Advert Asking To Be Eaten Alive – And A Cannibal Replied

malaysiandigest.com

Malaysian Digest

Published on Tuesday, 10 May 2016 14:46



Matej Curko who was shot dead by police suspected of cannibalism. (Right) Photographs of some of his victims Pic: metro.co.uk

Markus Dubach had been having suicidal thoughts but he had not been serious when he posted an advert about being eaten alive.

He was shocked, however, when he got a reply from a man, who professed to being a 'cannibal' and said he wanted to eat him.

Without intending to, Markus found himself in conversation with Slovakian Matej Curko, who he thought was making a 'morbid joke'.

But things began to escalate and Curko's messages were becoming increasingly intense.

In one he sent pictures of female body parts with the comment 'this was my work'.

It was at this point that Markus, who is to write a book on his experiences, decided to contact the police.

He arranged to meet Curko in the woods near the town of Kysak in 2011 but instead, armed police officers moved to arrest him.

However, the supposed cannibal had turned up armed and was fatally wounded in a shootout.

Local media reported that he had turned up for the meeting with razor-sharp knives, a meat cleaver, saw and body bag.

Although police were unable to interview Curko before his death he has since been linked to several dozen missing person cases.

Slovak police had been alerted to the incident by Interpol, which passed on a message from the Swiss.

It had been police that had kept the conversation going, pretending to be the prospective victim.

When they later looked in Curko's fridge they found human remains later identified as



Pic: metro.co.uk

belonging to Lucia Uchnarova, 20, and Elena Gudjakova, 30.

According to conversations found on Curko's computer, Uchnarova and Gudjakova voluntarily entered into the agreement with Curko, knowing they would be killed and eaten.

In the messages with Lucia, Curko is quoted as saying 'I am not a rapist, not gay, I am just a pervert who wants to feel death, to touch a dying body'.

Slovakian media has suggested since that Curko could have had even more victims.

He had also arranged to meet a 22-year-old from the Czech Republic, before he was caught and a shot.

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Forget something? This hot chocolate will help you remember it

11:01, 29 Apr 2016 Updated 11:01, 29 Apr 2016 By Laura Elvin

mirror.co.uk

Super-charged £1 hot chocolate drink scientists claim could boost your memory



Getty

MemoMax could help students with studies as it boosts memory function

A hot drink which claims to boost your memory might sound like science fiction, but scientists say it's absolutely real - and it only costs £1.

The first-ever memory drink claims it can even reverse cognitive decline in old age and it's just gone on sale in the UK.

With concentrated levels of naturally-occurring compound flavanols - clinically proven to improve memory - MemoMax could help memory ailments.

The chemicals are naturally found in foods like chocolate, but once they are processed they are almost totally lost and only exist in tiny levels.

Now experts working with UK-based Medifort claim to have found a way to process a special variety of cocoa bean which does not reduce its flavanol content.

The drink provides more than 15 TIMES the amount of flavanols in a normal hot chocolate - matching the levels boffins created in lab tests.

MemoMax claims the super-charged cocoa drink can reverse age-related memory decline by up to 30 YEARS in some cases.



Cocoa naturally have helpful flavanols but processing reduces them to tiny levels

It is also being marketed to students, claiming the formula can boost their exam performance.

Founder Andrew Parkinson said: "It works by using cocoa beans which have a slightly higher flavanol level than most, but it is the way that it is treated that really makes the difference.

Getty

"When you buy any chocolate or cocoa

drink it contains flavanols, but when processed it is alkalized which kills off over 90 per cent of the flavanols.

"But we have found a company with a unique way to process the cocoa which doesn't kill off the flavanols.

"The company doesn't actually reveal how they do it - they are very protective of it.

The drink formulated by Medifort has 850mg of flavanol, and is created by mixing 11g of powder with milk, and drunk once a day.

It costs £31.50 for a month supply with discounts for multiple purchases, and is based on scientific research by Columbia University Medical Centre in New York.

According to the research team, past studies suggested memory decline could be down to changes in a part of the brain called the dentate gyrus.



Getty

MemoMax could even help to reverse memory issues in old age, makers claim

Flavanols found in cocoa beans have been linked to improvements in connections in the dentate gyrus of mice.

The team tested 37 healthy adults between the ages of 50 and 69, to see if the same improvements were seen in humans, and if memory would improve as a result.

For three months around half the participants were given a high flavanol diet - using a drink specially made by confectionery giant Mars, who partly funded the study.

The diet saw them consume 900mg of flavanols a day - the equivalent of more than 16 standard cocoa drinks - via the drink which was only made for test purposes.

The other people had only 10mg of flavanols a day.

Brain scans revealed those who had the drink had a better functioning dentate gyrus - measured by blood flow in the area.

The test subjects were also asked to perform a 20-minute pattern recognition task, and those on the higher flavanol diet performed better than their counterparts.

Dr Scott Small, who led the study, said: "If a participant had the memory of a typical 60-year-

old at the beginning of the study, after three months that person on average had the memory of a typical 30 or 40-year-old."

The study was published in Nature Neuroscience in 2014.

Comments

(1)

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AMGLFC

What was that drink called again ?

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New York 'superhero' seeking recruits to clean up the streets

upi.com



By Ben Hooper | May 12, 2016 at 1:42 PM



Chris Pollack, aka Dark Guardian, is seeking superhero recruits to join his quest for justice. Screenshot: WPIX-TV

NEW YORK, May 12 (UPI) — A real-life "superhero" from Staten Island, N.Y., is patrolling the streets of New York City, looking for costumed

crusaders to join his real-life "Justice League."

Chris Pollack, aka Dark Guardian, founded the New York Ronins superhero academy with a successful GoFundMe campaign in 2013 and he said he is now seeking recruits to join in his quest for justice.

"We're going out on the streets to deter crime," Pollack told WPIX-TV. "We're looking out for people up to no good, we're getting out wanted flyers, we're just helping anyone we see in need."

Pollack, a martial arts instructor, said his ideal candidate would be "somebody who is actually physically capable, has some self defense skills."

"Of course they have to be street smart and be able to deal with people. We're not looking to get into fights but we are looking to handle situations," he said.

Dark Guardian is advertising a recruiting event on Facebook.

The event's description reads:

"Crime is on the rise in New York City. Slashings and attacks on citizens are becoming common place. There are issues between citizens and the police. There is a disconnect between the mayor and the police force. There is a need for community policing. We need people to stand up and fight against crime. There are what some people call real life superheroes that have been working to fight crime and help the

community. Dark Guardian has been doing so for many years. He's been featured in a HBO documentary and various media sources doing so.

Now he is looking for more heroes to help take to back the streets and help clean up New York City by joining his crime fighting team the NY Ronins (formerly New York Initiative).

It's time for the people to stand up and fight back against crime and apathy.

They are recruiting and have a meeting for those interested coming up on Sunday May 15th at Continental Center at 1:30pm."

Dark Guardian said he has recently increased patrols in Prospect Park after a recent sexual assault. Members of the New York Ronins have been putting up posters in the area seeking to find the "scumbag rapist."

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A brief history of how we fell in love with caffeine and chocolate

Friday 27th November 2015

historyextra.com



These everyday beverages, so integral to British life, all originally came from far-flung regions: coffee from the Arabian peninsula, tea from China, and chocolate from Mesoamerica. By a strange

coincidence, all arrived on our shores almost simultaneously during the middle of the 17th century, causing much debate about their benefits (or otherwise) to the health of the nation.

Here, Melanie King, the author of *Tea, Coffee & Chocolate: How We Fell in Love with Caffeine*, explores the origins of our obsession with caffeine and chocolate...

We may think of the 1650s as a time of puritanical austerity, with the banning of holly wreaths and the closing of theatres. But it was during these years of austerity that tea, coffee, and chocolate first went on sale in Britain. The first cup of coffee appears to have been served in 1650, in the Angel Inn in Oxford, where an enterprising Jewish merchant began the long tradition of seeing students through their exams.

The first cup of hot chocolate came seven years later, when in 1657 an advertisement informed the public that they could enjoy "an excellent West Indian drink called chocolate" at a house in Queen's Head Alley, Bishopsgate. One year later, a "China drink, called by the Chineans Tcha," was advertised as being sold at the Sultaness Head Coffee-House by the Royal Exchange. Tea was still an exotic novelty three years later, when Samuel Pepys reported in his diary that he had a cup of tea, "of which I had never drank before".

The sudden arrival of these three new beverages, all from distant foreign parts, immediately became the source of much curiosity, anxiety, and debate. Entrepreneurs extolled their health benefits, while sceptics made equally dubious announcements about their supposed harmful effects. For example, a 1664 treatise by a tea merchant, entitled *An Exact Description of the Growth, Quality and Vertues of the Leaf Tea*, confidently claimed that tea "vanquisheth heavie Dreams, easeth the Brain, strengthneth the Memory", while making the body "active and lusty". As Pepys discovered, apothecaries recommended cups of tea as a decongestant.

Coffee was also widely promoted as a 'cure-all'. A 1660 advertisement by James Gough, who sold coffee in Oxford, stated that coffee had so many advantages that "it would be too tedious to nominate everything it is good for". He nevertheless proceeded to give potential customers a long list that included consumption, gout, spleen, dropsy, rheumatism, headaches, and digestion. It was also effective, he pointedly noted, in banishing drowsiness in "students or others who are to sit up late, or all night". One of the grandest claims for coffee, made in 1721, was that it stopped the spread of the bubonic plague.

Chocolate, meanwhile, was promoted by various treatises, advertisements, and poems, such as *In Praise of Chocolate* by James Wadsworth (who wrote under the compelling pseudonym Don Diego de Vadesforte). A "lick of chocolate", Wadsworth claimed, not only helped women to get pregnant but, nine months later, eased the pains and length of childbirth! The cosmetic effects were equally irresistible: "Twill make Old women Young and Fresh." Little wonder that fashionable women were soon sipping chocolate in bed, assisted by a special vessel, the *mancerina*, that prevented them from spilling the liquid onto their sheets.

Such bold claims about these new drinks did not go unchallenged. Equally vocal bands of detractors blamed the beverages for undermining the health, morale, and industry of the nation. The fact that they were to be drunk hot became a source of concern, since hot liquids were believed to boil the blood and therefore upset the balance of the four humours [the ancient Greek theory that the health of the body was controlled by four bodily fluids – blood, yellow bile, black bile, and phlegm]. The perils of drinking hot liquids were graphically illustrated by a Fellow of the Royal Society, Dr Stephen Hales, who studied the

effects of dipping a suckling pig's tail in a cup of tea.



Smart gentlemen drinking, smoking and chatting in a coffee house, c1668. (Photo by Rischgitz/Getty Images)

Other alarming claims were made about tea drinking: it supposedly enfeebled the spirits, dried the brain, caused people to commit suicide, and led to a drop in productivity among workers, since even the lowliest labourers, as one opponent furiously noted, downed tools to enjoy a cup of tea. Coffee fared little better – it was denounced in a poem as a “decoction of the devils”, while a 1661 broadsheet claimed that it made men effeminate. In

1674, another broadsheet elaborated the effects of coffee on masculine performance, deploring this ‘heathenish liquor’ for making men unable to discharge their conjugal duties. The women of Britain were, as a result of their men sipping coffee, “languishing in an extremity of want”.

If coffee was suspect because it came from ‘heathen’ lands – the Middle East – chocolate raised suspicions because it was associated with Catholics: the Spanish monks and conquistadors who had been the first Europeans to sample and export it. Its use in Aztec rituals (it sometimes served as a substitute for blood) was also a cause for suspicion. A physician and naturalist named Martin Lister noted that chocolate may have been a suitable drink for “wild Indians” but was hardly one for the “pampered” British.

In the 1660s, chocolate even played a part in a high society sex scandal, when one of the mistresses of the Duke of York (the future James VII and II), Lady Denham, fell ill and died. The poet Andrew Marvell reported that the venom had apparently been administered in a cup of “mortal Chocolate”. An autopsy ruled out any toxin, though it also claimed (as the sceptical Samuel Pepys noted) that she had died a virgin.

Despite their many opponents, all three beverages – tea, coffee, and hot chocolate – became an established part of the British diet, and advice was quickly produced on how best to prepare and enjoy them. The philosopher and courtier Sir Kenelm Digby suggested that tea should be steeped for no longer than it took to recite Psalm 51 (about three minutes).

Pasqua Rosee, an Armenian immigrant who ran London’s first coffee shop, offered advice on how to make and drink a cup of coffee: the grounds should, he said, be boiled with spring water, the liquid then drunk on an empty stomach with no food taken for an hour afterwards. A recipe from 1667 recommended mixing coffee powder with equal quantities of butter and salad oil, proving that today’s trends such as bulletproof coffee – a mixture of coffee and butter – are nothing new. Meanwhile a doctor named Benjamin Moseley suggested that those suffering from flatulence or scurvy might wish to add mustard to their coffee.

Coffee was often consumed in coffee houses, which in London became venues for gossip, political debate and, in the eyes of the authorities, sedition. A publication entitled *Rules and Orders of the Coffee House* pointed out that, in these establishments, “people of all qualities and conditions” gathered, with no consideration for ranks or titles. Charles II grew so worried about the subversive political effects of coffee houses that in 1675 he ordered their closure. Such was the public indignation that within days he was forced to rescind his proclamation. Within a few decades, by the early 18th century, there were around 3,000 coffee houses in England.

Chocolate, too, was drunk in special establishments. Unlike coffee, it was not a democratic drink that catered to all ranks of society. More expensive than both tea and coffee, chocolate became the drink of the affluent. Consequently, chocolate houses – White's, Ozinda's, and the Cocoa Tree – were found in the aristocratic area around Pall Mall in London. Chocolate was often spiced up with exotic ingredients. It was used for dipping wigg bread (a bread spiced with cloves, nutmeg and caraway seeds), and it might be stirred into wine, brandy, port, or sherry. Pepys's first encounter with chocolate was in a tavern where, as a hangover cure, it was mixed with his morning draft of wine.

Odd as some of these complaints and prescriptions might seem to us today, the health benefits of coffee, tea, and chocolate are still today the subject of much debate and scientific study. We may not have broadsheets anymore, but the internet is full of testimony about the pros and cons of drinking coffee; the fat-burning and cancer-fighting properties of green tea; and the cholesterol-lowering and memory-boosting powers of chocolate. These three drinks have as strong a hold on us as ever.

Melanie King is a freelance writer of historical non-fiction. Her book *Tea, Coffee & Chocolate: How We Fell in Love with Caffeine* (Bodleian Publishing) is out now. To find out more, [click here](#).

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Teen Dead After Playing Dangerous Game

By Kathryn Sotnik

Published at 10:21 PM EDT on May 16, 2016

necn.com



Massachusetts

An eyewitness says these kids were playing a game of "dead" where kids lay in the road to scare people. And sadly this teen lost his life right here on this road. (Published Monday, May 16, 2016)

Around 2:30 on Saturday morning, 16-year-old Zamir Sanders was killed after being hit and dragged by a car in Springfield, Massachusetts.

Police say Zamir and three other teens were "horsing around" near the street when he ended up laying down on the side of the road on purpose.

"I heard they were playing a game called 'dead' and someone lays down in the road and plays dead, and I really hope they don't play that game anymore," said neighbor Jessica Francis.

"They were having what was called a fake fight basically to scare the people that were going by in traffic," said Springfield Sgt. John Delaney.

Police say the 41-year-old woman from Chicopee who hit Zamir was not familiar with the area and attempted to drive around the stopped car in front of her.

According to police, the driver hit the teen and drove about 300 feet with him under her car until Zamir's friends finally banged on the car to stop her.

Delaney said she has been cooperating with police over the last couple of days and is "emotionally and physically upset."

Police said she even say she tried to help Zamir.

"She went out to the trunk of her car got out the car jack and jacked up her car, EMTs arrived, she helped extricate that young man," said Delaney.

Police are calling this a tragic accident that sadly took the life of a young teen, and said that Zamir's three friends ran off right after the accident. For 14 hours police had no idea who he was.

Police say they are conducting a thoughtful and thorough investigation.

The driver of the car has not been cited.

A roadside memorial remains on St. James Ave. in Springfield.

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Teenager Arrested Over Theft Of Spaceship

sky.com

<http://news.sky.com/story/1668501/teenager-arrested-over-theft-of-spaceship>

The model spaceship, which was mounted outside Roswell's UFO Museum, was stolen by three men in a pick-up truck.



The UFO Museum in Roswell, New Mexico.

The model spaceship seen outside the museum (far left)

A teenage boy has been arrested over the theft of a fibreglass and metal version of a spaceship from outside the UFO Museum in Roswell, New Mexico.

The model has been a fixture in downtown Roswell, where it was mounted outside the museum before a recent snowstorm damaged it.

It was being stored behind the museum when it was stolen on

19 March.

Police said three people could be seen in surveillance video hauling the spaceship off in a pick-up truck.

Officers say they are still searching for two other suspects.



The UFO Museum in Roswell, New Mexico.

The model was found in pieces

The saucer was found in pieces two miles west of the city last Wednesday.

Police said tip offs led them to the teenager, who was arrested at his south Roswell home on Saturday.

His name has not been released.

The city has been linked with UFOs for decades, after a flying object crashed at a ranch in 1947.

The US government said it was a weather balloon, but conspiracy theorists claim the government covered up an alien crash landing.

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UK

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Texas Chainsaw Massacre Prop Flagged By TSA - Dread Central

dreadcentral.com



Posted on May 16, 2016 by Steve Barton

Not even props are safe from being delayed by the TSA as evidenced by this image posted by the **US Transportation Security Administration's Instagram page**.

"Talk about deadheading... This crusty ol' chap is actually a prop from the #TexasChainsawMassacre movie. He was brought through a checkpoint at the Atlanta (#ATL) International Airport, where as you can see, he was screened and sent on his jolly way. #TSAOnTheJob"

We feel far safer already. Check out the eye candy below if only for shits and giggles. Nubbins wept.



Steve Barton

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TCM Prop

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Face Value: The Bellows Falls Petroglyphs

wordpress.com

Posted on August 9, 2015 By Chad Abramovich



Logo



*These were some of the carvings that didn't make it into the 21st century.
Image : History of the Town of Rockingham, Vermont including the villages of Bellows Falls, Saxtons River, Rockingham – Cambridgeport and Bartonville.
These were some of the carvings that didn't make it into the 21st century.
Image : History of the Town of Rockingham, Vermont including the villages of Bellows Falls, Saxtons River, Rockingham – Cambridgeport and Bartonville.
The Vilas Bridge A Bellows Falls attraction or service? One of my favorite finds in Bellows Falls – A 275-foot railroad tunnel running underneath a section of the downtown district. Built in 1851, this tunnel is a rather impressive reminder of when three railroad lines were brought through Bellows Falls, helping industrial growth and creating one of the most important railroad junctions in New England. What's striking about this tunnel is that its partially cut through solid rock and reinforced with massive stone blocks. Today, these tracks are more or less quiet, a reminder of how the automobile overtook rail travel.
Industrial ruins along the riverfront looking down where the turbine once was.
The Robertson Paper Company, another beautiful old building on Factory Island*

Bellows Falls is a great village, and has a history that goes back to it's Abenaki populace who were lured here by the great falls, extends past White settlement who built an industrial canal to bypass the affor-referenced falls and continues today through it's distinction as a tourist area and waypoint community for the Connecticut River Byway.

There is a cool yet controversial mid century mural painted on a wall downtown that nostalgically reads Bellows Falls is a good place to hang your hat. It's also apparently a good place to chisel your petroglyphs.

The Bellows Falls petroglyphs are located on a few large boulders found in the dramatic gorge below the defunct Vilas Bridge that cuts down to the Connecticut River.

Basically, the carvings are an arrangement of rough circles with three dots inside, with some containing pairs of lines that radiate out from the top. It's surmised that they depict a cluster of 24 odd sized faces, but there is some disagreement on exactly what they are, with arguments for human, animal, extraterrestrial, or other. The lines atop the circles prove to be just as interesting. It's said that they could be anything from hair of that era, feathers from headdresses, deer antlers, sun rays, or alien antennas. But no one can say for sure.

We don't even know how old they are, with estimates ranging from 300 to 3,000 years old – some considering them the oldest pieces of art existing in Vermont. What we do know however, is that they



The Robertson Paper Company, another beautiful old building on
Factory Island

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were made known in 1789, when visiting reverend David McClure from Dartmouth College wrote about them in his notes, and suggested that they were made by the Abenaki, the native people of the area.

The explanations of these cryptic images are plentiful. McClure speculated that they could be translated as an Abenaki warning that the site marked the location of "evil spirits", a shamanistic idea that came from associating places like river gorges and waterfalls as a place to communicate with the spirit world. But that was contested by an Englishman named Edward Kendall, who while traveling through Bellows Falls in 1808, believed that they were nothing more than the banal doodles of a bored Abenaki fisherman on a slow day at the river. Plenty of other theories have morphed since then and include everything in between, from grave markers, religious symbols, aliens, memento mori from an important battle, depictions of people who had drowned in the rapids, and the carvings from Abenaki shaman who recorded their visions while hallucinating on the river's edge.

But it may be the orientation of the petroglyphs which may tell us something of their significance. They face west, towards the village. If this isn't just a coincidence, Abenaki lore dictates that west is the direction where an Abenaki soul travels after death, meaning that they may be preternatural wayfinding signs for their departed. Interestingly, the artificial industrial island made by the Bellows Falls Canal was at one point an important Abenaki burial ground. For decades afterwards, development on the island and local road construction projects would continuously surprise the laborers who unearthed numerous skeletons and artifacts, and became sort of a local spectacle.

Here's where things get interesting. McClure's description only mention three faces, which are greatly more detailed than what can be found on the bottom of the gorge today, leaving some to postulate that counterfeit ones have been added over the years.

In the 1930s, some misguided locals got together and had the carvings deepened to preserve them from the constant erosion of the river, damaging their value as historical artifacts and keeping their age and purpose still in the realm of the mysterious.



Indian Sculptures at Bellows Falls.
Early in the 19th Century.

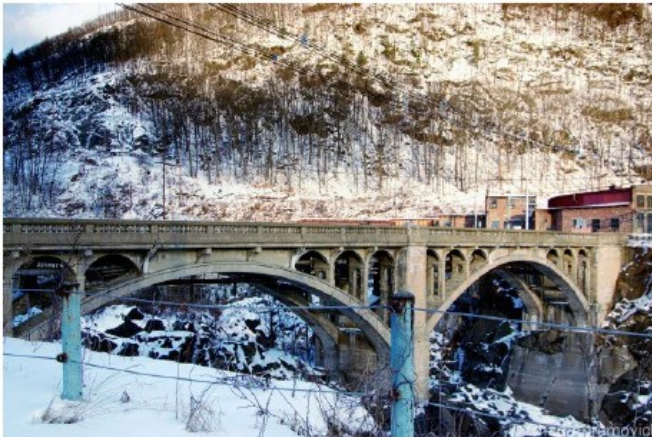
It actually amazes me that these petroglyphs have survived at all. During the nineteenth century, the Bellows Falls river/canal area was a hive of rambunctious industrial activity. Much of the river gorge was permanently reconstructed by dynamite blasts that were used to clear away log jams, which is a real disappointment, because it seems that those cliffs held more than a few curiosities. One sad account comes from sometime in the 1800s. A fascinating curiosity was found embedded in a rock near the Connecticut River; a baffling fossil of a five foot, clearly defined footprint that looked like it came from a bird, but the species was unknown. This

caused quite a stir in both the scientific community, and the local one. What could have possibly made a footprint that big? Unfortunately, we'll never know. Word of this important discovery got out and a group of rowdy locals found it first, and dynamited it out of existence. It's very possible that there may have been more of these petroglyphs as well, that were destroyed to make a few bucks.

The petroglyphs are pretty easy to find. They're located at the end of Bridge Street near the Vilas Bridge, which is the indefinitely crumbling bridge with grass growing through it's deteriorating surface, and not the other better kept bridge that crosses the canal onto the island. Once you get to the "Bridge Closed" sign, they're down in the gorge to the right of the bridge. The rocks have been marked with

strips of yellow paint to guide you to their location, and if you have a camera with a good zoom lens, you should be able to see them. Or, you can do what I did, and take the “trail” to the left of the bridge, which I guess is a very debatable definition, and really was more of a distinguishable area of low brush that meandered between taller thick adjacent brush and trees, which eventually dropped you down a steep rocky embankment and into the gorge. From there, it’s all boulder clamber underneath the Vilas Bridge, but from this approach, you can get right next to them. My scratched and bleeding legs were worth it.

What I loved best about these petroglyphs, besides how they are still a lingering mystery, is the obscurity of them. There is no fences around them with colorful “keep out” signs, and no logos from local universities slapped down anywhere. They simply exist just outside town, quiet and more or less undisturbed.



The Vilas Bridge

The Bellows Falls Train Graveyard

In the cold days of winter in 2013, I explored and photographed scores of abandoned train cars that lined both sides of the Connecticut River. The yards and the scrapped rail cars are owned by the Green Mountain Railroad, which has a long history of perpetuating industry and travel in the Bellows Falls area, and as rail travel became secondary to the automobile, it left quite a few old passenger cars from the 40s and 50s parked along the river banks, slowly eroding with idle time.



DSC_0486_pe_pe

Driving Around Bellows Falls

One of my favorite adventures in Bellows Falls was just driving aimlessly around the narrow streets that climb it’s steep terraced hills above the river, checking out the different neighborhoods, which managed to be so enjoyable that it almost blocked out my friend Daniel blasting dub step on his car stereo and serially asking me “Chad! Is this your jam man? I bet you know all of these lyrics!”

Additional Links:

The Abenaki and the Bellows Falls (VT) Petroglyphs – This great write up was paramount to my research on the petroglyphs.

Mystery is written in rocks of Bellows Falls – *The Barre Times Argus*, June 21st, 2009

Hayes, Lyman Simpson, 1907 *History of the Town of Rockingham, Vermont including the villages of Bellows Falls, Saxtons River, Rockingham – Cambridgeport and Bartonville. 1753-1907 with family genealogies*. There is a digital copy online you can view, if you’re so inclined.

Obscure Vermont



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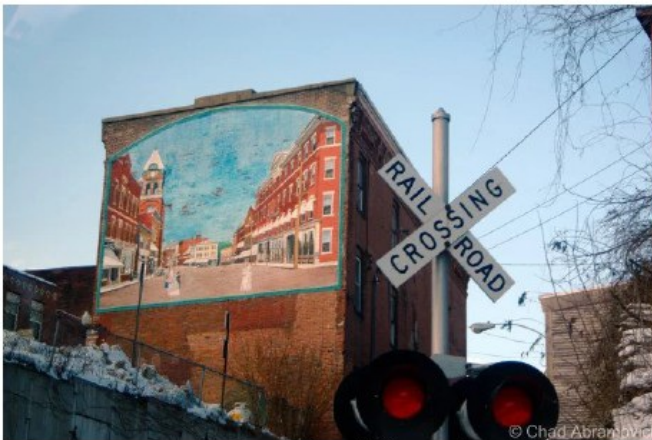
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A Bellows Falls attraction or service?



One of my favorite finds in Bellows Falls – A 275-foot railroad tunnel running underneath a section of the downtown district. Built in 1851, this tunnel is a rather impressive reminder of when three railroad lines were brought through Bellows Falls, helping industrial growth and creating one of the most important railroad junctions in New England. What's striking about this tunnel is that its partially cut through solid rock and reinforced with massive stone blocks. Today, these tracks are more or less quiet, a reminder of how the automobile overtook rail travel.



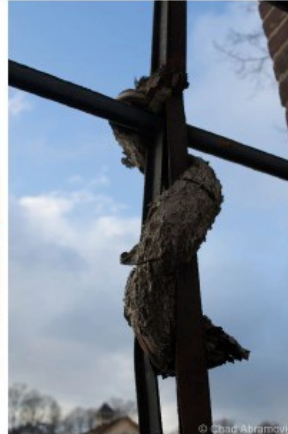
Another Bellows Falls mural.



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Industrial ruins along the riverfront



DSC_0513



looking down where the turbine once was.



DSC_0502_pe



DSC_0499_pe



DSC_0633_pe

The business of body snatching in Indianapolis

Dawn Mitchell, dawn.mitchell@indystar.com

indystar.com

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Buy Photo

An Aug. 8, 1903, IndyStar story details the confessions of grave robber Rufus Cantrell. (Photo: IndyStar archives)

When a young girl's family visited her grave the day after her burial, their grief turned to horror when they found her tiny slipper lying in the snow next to her grave. Indianapolis went into an uproar.

Then complaints of similar occurrences started. Disturbed graves and hints of tampering were noted. Investigations began, and they had a suspect.

When police arrested Rufus Cantrell on suspicion of grave robbing in 1901, they had no idea the scope of the operation.

Newspaper accounts referred to Cantrell as "The King of the Ghouls," a grave-robbing syndicate that emptied graves across Indianapolis for the purpose of selling them to medical colleges. Cantrell spilled the beans on every operation and rode with police around the city pointing out more than 100 empty graves. He even led them to the basements of several medical colleges and implicated the doctors who ran the institutions. Cantrell also helped police close investigations of several high-profile missing-persons cases — admitting their bodies were taken to medical colleges and then disposed of.

Medical students needed the hands-on study of human anatomy, yet there were no legal ways for medical schools to procure cadavers for dissections. Students would take matters into their own hands and steal corpses, but in the late 1890s, the practice of stealing corpses by unscrupulous individuals was big business — and business was booming.

They were called night ghouls, body snatchers and resurrectionists.

There were two rules for grave robbing — wait until the mourners had left the cemetery and never allow a subject to lie in its grave overnight.

Early grave robbing was sloppy, careless and attracted attention. Grave robbers then changed their tactics and placed the clothes back in the grave. Jewels and keepsakes were a

bonus, but they had to be careful not to sell them locally for fear of the pieces being recognized.

Body snatching was a three-man operation: one to drive the carriage and two to remove the remains. It was customary to open the grave and pull the corpse out with an iron hook placed under the chin. The body was stripped naked and wrapped in heavy cloth, leaving the shrouds and clothes behind. The grave was restored, bodies delivered and the robbers paid \$15-\$30 for an hour's work.

Central State Hospital cemetery at West Washington Street and Tibbs Avenue, Greenlawn Cemetery along the White River just north of what would later become Kentucky Avenue, and Mount Jackson cemetery at 210 N. Tibbs were routinely targeted by the robbers. But news accounts indicate cemeteries across the Indianapolis area and beyond were easy targets of the robbers.

Grave robbers became a dying breed when the state legislature created the State Anatomical Board as a result of the conviction of Cantrell and his ghoulish syndicate. Unclaimed bodies and indigent dead were registered with the board and either buried in county cemeteries or donated to medical colleges when they requested a cadaver.

Call Star producer Dawn Mitchell at (317) 444-6497. Follow her on Twitter: @dawn_mitchell61.



Buy Photo

The Okey Burial Vault Co. promised protection against ghouls.

(Photo: Indianapolis News)

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The Changing Story of Cnut and the Waves - Medievalists.net medievalists.net

May 24, 2015 By Medievalists.net

There is famous story about King Cnut and the waves. However, most people know do not know the original version.



Cnut and the Waves

Cnut was the ruler of England for 19 years – he conquered the country in 1016 after father Sweyn Forkbeard died (he had only ruled England for a few months), and later became also the King of Denmark and King of Norway. Most historians have found him to be a very capable ruler, with one even calling him “the most effective king in Anglo-Saxon history.”

For most people, what they might remember about this Cnut is a short story where the King goes to the seashore to order the waves from the incoming tide to stop.

The original version of the story appears in the *Historia Anglorum*, by Henry, Archdeacon of Huntingdon, a twelfth-century chronicle covering the history of England from ancient times to the year 1154. In a section following his mention of Cnut’s death in 1035, Henry offers some words of praise for the king:

In addition to the many wars in which he was most particularly illustrious, he performed three fine and magnificent deeds. The first is that he gave his daughter in marriage to the Roman emperor, with indescribable riches. The second, that on his journey to Rome, he had the evil taxes that were levied on the road that goes through France, called tolls or passage tax, reduced by half at his own expense. The third, that when he was at the height of his ascendancy, he ordered his chair to be placed on the sea-shore as the tide was coming in. Then he said to the rising tide, “You are subject to me, as the land on which I am sitting is mine, and no one has resisted my overlordship with impunity. I command you, therefore, not to rise on to my land, nor to presume to wet the clothing or limbs of your master.” But the sea came up as usual, and disrespectfully drenched the king’s feet and shins. So jumping back, the king cried, “Let all the world know that the power of kings is empty and worthless, and there is no king worthy of the name save Him by whose will heaven, earth and sea obey eternal laws.” Thereafter King Cnut never wore the golden crown on his neck, but placed it on the image of the crucified Lord, in eternal praise of God the great king. By whose mercy may the soul of King Cnut enjoy rest.

Historians have been a little skeptical on whether this story really happened – Henry did write this work more than a century after Cnut’s reign, and no source closer to that period mentions anything like it. Still it proved to be a good enough tale of piety to be included in later medieval works.

The story was also included in *The History of England*, by the 18th century writer David Hume. This best-selling work, however, adds in new details to the story:

Canute, the greatest and most powerful monarch of his time, sovereign of Denmark and Norway, as well as of England, could not fail of meeting with adulation from his courtiers; a tribute which is literally paid even to the meanest and weakest princes. Some of his flatterers breaking out, one day, in admiration of his grandeur, exclaimed that every thing was possible for him: Upon which the monarch, it is said, ordered his chair to be set on the sea-shore, while the tide was rising, and as the waters approached, he commanded them to retire, and to obey the voice who was lord of the ocean. He feigned to sit some time in expectation of their submission; but when the sea still advanced towards him, and began to wash him with its billows, he turned to his courtiers, and remarked to them, that every creature in the universe was feeble and impotent, and that power resided with one Being alone, in whose hands were all the elements of nature; who could say to ocean, 'Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther'; and who could level with his nod the most towering piles of human pride and ambition.

While the main narrative of the story remains the same, the reasons why Cnut did this have changed – while in Huntingdon's account he is acknowledging the supremacy of God and his piety to Him, in Hume's version he was doing this more to rebuke his own courtiers, who were praising him too much. One could argue that both versions of the story are good tales, with King Cnut being shown in a positive light. However, in the centuries since it has been Hume's version that most people read about, and other authors have even added more embellishments to it, such as William J. Bennett, who **provides this account** in his 1993 work, *The Book of Virtues*:

Long ago, England was ruled by a king named Canute. Like many leaders and men of power, Canute was surrounded by people who were always praising him. Every time he walked into a room, the flattery began.

"You are the greatest man that ever lived," one would say.

"O king, there can never be another as mighty as you," another would insist.

"Your highness, there is nothing you cannot do," someone would smile.

"Great Canute, you are the monarch of all," another would sing. "Nothing in this world dares to disobey you."

The king was a man of sense, and he grew tired of hearing such foolish speeches. One day he was walking by the seashore, and his officers and courtiers were with him, praising him as usual. Canute decided to teach them a lesson.

"So you say I am the greatest man in the world?" he asked them.

"O king," they cried, "there never has been anyone as mighty as you, and there never will be anyone so great, ever again!"

"And you say all things obey me?" Canute asked.

"Absolutely!" they said. "The world bows before you, and gives you honour."

"I see," the king answered. "In that case, bring me my chair, and we will go down to the water."

"At once, your majesty!" They scrambled to carry his royal chair over the sands. "Bring it closer to the sea," Canute called. "Put it right here, right at the water's edge." He sat down and surveyed the ocean before him. "I notice the tide is coming in. Do you think it will stop if I give the command?"

His officers were puzzled, but they did not dare say no. "Give the order, O great king, and it will obey," one of them assured him.

"Very well. Sea," cried Canute, "I command you to come no further! Waves, stop your rolling! Surf, stop your pounding! Do not dare touch my feet!"

He waited a moment, quietly, and a tiny wave rushed up the sand and lapped at his feet. "How dare you!" Canute shouted. "Ocean, turn back now! I have ordered you to retreat before me, and now you must obey! Go back!"

And in answer another wave swept forward and curled around the king's feet. The tide came in, just as it always did. The water rose higher and higher. It came up around the king's chair, and wet not only his feet, but also his robe. His officers stood about him, alarmed, and wondering whether he was not mad.

"Well, my friends," Canute said, "it seems I do not have quite so much power as you would have me believe. Perhaps you have learned something today. Perhaps now you will remember there is only one King who is all-powerful, and it is he who rules the sea, and holds the ocean in the hollow of his hand. I suggest you reserve your praises for him."

The royal officers and courtiers hung their heads and looked foolish. And some say Canute took off his crown soon afterward, and never wore it again.

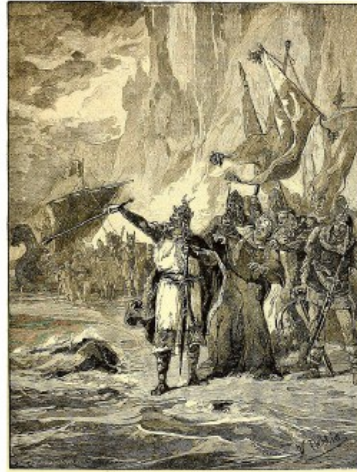
The story has also been illustrated several times, and one can see that in every scene we have the courtiers on hand for their rebuking:

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Canute rebuking his Courtiers

R. E. Pine - The People's Gallery of Engravings,
1848



"Canute rebukes his courtiers" by
Alphonse-Marie-Adolphe de
Neuville.

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Esmeralda Lock (Locke) : The Dancing Gypsy Girl | Bridgnorth Tourist Information

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Articles » Esmeralda Lock (Locke) : The Dancing Gypsy Girl



Born in 1854, Esmeralda Lock was Noah and Delaia's most vivacious and beautiful daughter. In Shropshire the family regularly pitched their tents on the banks of the Severn at Bridgnorth on property owned by local solicitor Hubert Smith, who was the Town Clerk of Bridgnorth between 1873 and 1887

The Locks were remembered as being good musicians and playing violins whilst dressed in top hats. At 16 years old Esmeralda and her brothers Noah and Zachariah were invited by Smith to spend the summers with him in Norway. Subsequently, he published a book, *Tent Life with English Gypsies in Norway*, in which dark-eyed Esmeralda danced across the white page.

Smith was in his fifties at the time and became infatuated by Esmeralda. She didn't feel the same, but gave in to pressure and married him in 1874.

They lived in St Leonard Close, over looking the church, the house still exists today known as the Mundens.

Esmeralda didn't give up her footloose life easily. She tried running away from her husband but was returned by her father; another time she made her escape by knocking Smith out with a silver candlestick.

Salvation arrived in a visit from Francis Hindes Groome, a young scholar interested in Gypsies with whom Esmeralda fell in love. When Groome left, she told her husband that she was bewitched and must see a gozvalo gajo (wise man). But the wise man was Groome, and the lovers were reunited in Bristol. Eventually, they ran away to Germany, where Groome worked as a translator whilst Esmeralda sang and danced. On returning to England, she found similar work in London theatres. Then Groome moved up to work in Edinburgh, and Esmeralda went with him.

Hubert Smith filed for divorce but attempted one last reconciliation. He met with his wife at an hotel in Scotland, and they spent the night together. In the morning she declared a desperate dream foretelling her lover's suicide unless she said a final goodbye. Smith agreed to her going to see Groome for two hours. Esmeralda went ... and never returned.



esmeralda

After a sensational divorce case, the lovers married and settled down. Gradually, they made their way into literary and artistic circles, and pre-Raphaelite painter Dante Gabriel Rossetti portrayed Esmeralda as one of his erotic idealised women, a dancing gypsy girl and most famously as Victor Hugos Esmeralda.

Esmeralda often returned to travel with her parents, and her wayward spirit became too much for Groome. The couple separated. A few years before he died in 1902, Groome wrote to her: "We must never meet again on this side of the grave", and they never did.

After travelling around Cheshire and North Wales in a green and yellow caravan, Esmeralda finally drew up at Prestatyn during the First World War. She remained there for the rest of her life, the centre of much attention, until she was felled by a bus in 1939 and duly buried in Rhyl.

There are a number of books referring to Esmeralda including "The Scholar Gypsy" by Anthony Sampson, published by John Murray, and "Songs From The Roadside" by Jeremy Sandford, published by The Redlake Press.

Sources

<http://www.valleystream.co.uk/romany-lock.htm>

3 Comments

1. Pauline Lee August 6, 2013 at 10:51 pm

Esmeralda Lock Boswell was my Grandmother,s sister. My Grandmother was Ada Lock Boswell.I have searched for over 2 years for a photograph of my Grandmother Ada, Would you have any lead to offer me Please. Yours truly.Pauline Lee.

2. kala doyle August 7, 2013 at 1:30 pm

esmeralda was my grandmothers ada s sister

3. Don Hazeldine October 8, 2014 at 8:16 pm

Esmeralda was my great grandfather Zebulin's sister

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The Dead in 3D: The Rothwell Charnel Chapel Project Online! - Medievalists.net

medievalists.net

Medievalists.net

The Dead in 3D: The Rothwell Charnel Chapel Project Online!

April 17, 2016 By Medievalists.net



Rothwell Charnel Chapel skulls. (Photo by Medievalists.net)

In August 2015, I attended an open house for the Rothwell Charnel Chapel Project in Kettering. Since the mid-thirteenth century, Holy Trinity Church has been home to the charnel house where Rothwell's inhabitants have been laid to rest for hundreds of years. In the past seven months, the Rothwell Charnel Chapel Project has evolved to become more than just a research and preservation

project, but has morphed into a virtual exhibit, and fascinating online learning resource that will be available globally. The project has been spearheaded by University of Sheffield Archaeologist, Dr. Jennifer Crangle, for the past four years. Work on the chapel began back in 2012 as part of Crangle's dissertation, and the website was finally unveiled to the public at an event in late March of this year.

The Ossuary at Rothwell: What Was It?

An ossuary was a place where the bones of the deceased were kept, and because it was an important feature of medieval religious belief, charnel chapels were attached to religious buildings, such as monasteries, Cathedrals, churches or hospitals. Charnel houses were prominently situated in religious centres close to a main entrance so they could be easily accessible to the public and pilgrims.

Here in England, charnel houses were active between the 13th-16th centuries, but many were destroyed during the Dissolution of the Monasteries between 1536-1541, by order of Henry VIII (1491-1547). Most charnel houses ended up being repurposed for other activities after the Reformation, but Rothwell was sealed. This act may have saved it from the same fate as other medieval charnel sites. The charnel house in Rothwell, and St. Leonard's in Hythe, miraculously survived, and remain the only two charnel houses left in their original state in England.

According to a Victorian source, the Rothwell charnel house was rediscovered by a grave digger in 1700. Another source dated to 1712, written by the local rector, John Morton, talked

about the chapel, reigniting interest in it. Locals have been fascinated by it since the eighteenth century, and the earliest photos of the charnel house were taken in 1912.



Rothwell Charnel Chapel – inside the ossuary. (Photo by Medievalists.net)

Conservation Issues and Other Challenges

Over the years, attempts were made to preserve the chapel's remains. Bones were stacked carefully to aerate them and prevent further damage from the damp conditions, but it's still an uphill battle. The charnel house is cold and damp, with sealed windows so it's difficult to get air circulation into the crypt.

Estimates as to the number of people in the charnel house have been difficult to ascertain, but currently hover around 2,500. University of Sheffield lecturer, Dr. Elizabeth Craig-Atkins, suggested that this was likely a low estimate, and only represents the minimum number of bones.

Another difficulty for the project has been the ability to date the remains in the charnel house. The process is extremely expensive (approximately £300/\$427 USD as of this writing) to have fragments radio carbon dated, and destructive to the bones because they have to be ground up in order to get accurate data. Rothwell was able to send off only five samples to determine if they have viable material to proceed with further dating. The good news is that the initial results were positive. Unfortunately, the final results from the actual carbon dating will take six weeks to determine, but it's a big step forward in adding more information to this important project.

Rothwell Online: A Virtual Tour of the Charnel House

After a successful public opening, the Rothwell Charnel Chapel team have moved onto making the research, further excavation activities, and discoveries, available to the public. Dr. Jennifer Crangle, Dr. Elizabeth Craig-Atkins, and Peter Heywood presented a 'taster' of the project timeline, where they are today, and the next steps in the creation of the virtual ossuary. They wanted to bring the charnel chapel online to serve as a forum to tell people what they were doing, to promote the preservation of the charnel house, and to use it as a teaching resource about medieval burial practices. The website will help answer questions such as: *Who were the people in the chapel? What can the skeletal remains tell us about their lives? How did it survive the Reformation? How many bones lie down there?*



Dr. Jennifer Crangle and Peter Heywood

The Virtual Tour of the Crypt

Heywood, who heads the IT on the project, presented a virtual reality demonstration of what visitors to the site might see over the coming months. The crypt had never been documented in such detail before; it underwent 17 scans, and collected over 600 million points of data to create a mesh from the point cloud.

Technological Challenges

As with any new technology, naturally, there were challenges. Due to the physical constraints of the space, it was difficult to accurately capture certain points in the room. The crypt is not large, at only 9m x 4m x 2.5m, with an extremely uneven tamped clay floor, coupled with the fact that care had to be taken when moving about so as not to disturb, or damage, the remains. This made scanning and lighting equipment tricky to navigate in certain areas.

There were also difficulties with variance in the point cloud density. Lighting presented obstacles too, as sources were either too close to the equipment, or too bright, picking up shadows and gaps in scans. Heywood, along with website creator, Joe Priestley, is working out the bugs to improve the detail of the model. They are also trying to reduce the file size of the 3D model so it can be viewed easily on the web, and studying the lighting environment to get clearer results in the future.

The Rothwell Charnel Chapel Project: Next Steps and Aspirations

The Rothwell Charnel Chapel Project is continually evolving and growing, and the tremendous efforts being made here are a major feat in digital forensic archeology. The team has seen a flurry of activity with the launch of the website, and recently attended the *Computer Applications & Quantitative Methods in Archaeology* conference in Oslo to present their findings. The project also opened its **Facebook page** to the public so that people can follow along on social media. It has been an exhilarating and rewarding experience for those involved over the past four years and shows no signs of slowing down.

What do they hope will come of this latest step forward in the development of Rothwell? They'd like to see this project help further their research with a diverse range of interested groups, and strengthen the project's international reputation in hopes of attracting potential funding opportunities. Ultimately, they hope the online resource will tell the world about the crypt at Rothwell, and shed light on its importance to medieval funerary archeology, religious life, and personal beliefs about death and burial.

The Rothwell Charnel Chapel Project Team

Dr. Jennifer Grangle

Dr. Elizabeth Craig-Atkins
Greer Dewdney
Peter Heywood
Dr. Steve Maddock
Dr. Robin Scott
Joe Priestley
Tom Hodgson
Professor Dawn Hadley

Please visit: **The Rothwell Charnel Chapel Project**

~**Sandra Alvarez**

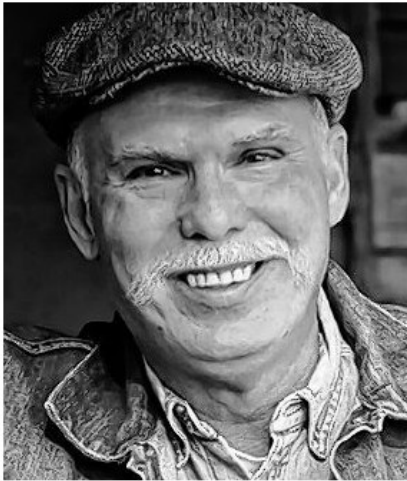
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Posted on May 18, 2016 by richmondcountydailyjournal

'The Goat Man's coming'

J.A. Bolton - Storyteller



**"The
Goat
Man's**

Contributed photo The Goat Man stands by his wagon and team of goats.

coming" was a familiar saying through the middle parts of the twentieth century; all over our country. Sometimes traffic would be backed up for miles, following a large rickety ol' wagon with a smaller one in tow. Both were being pulled and pushed by as many as 18 goats. Yes, I said goats. You know, them smelly creatures with horns.

Sitting atop the lead wagon would be a Robinson Crusoe-looking character by the name of Ches McCartney — better known as "the Goat Man." With his long beard, tattered clothes and hardly-ever-washed body, the Goat Man, — along with his team of all sorts of goats — traveled up and down the highways selling his wares and preaching the gospel. His visits to small-town America became as important as the arrival of the yearly carnival.

At a record-breaking speed of one mile an hour, the Goat Man's arrival would be announced for days prior to his triumphant entry. Local newspapers would carry photos and write-ups describing the strange-looking caravan and even radio stations found him to be the main topic of conversations. In fact, he would often be given the opportunity to expound upon his favorite subjects: Heaven, Hell and brimstone.

Arriving on the outskirts of town — yes, he did come through Anson, Scotland and Richmond counties — he would set up camp. While his goats rested, he'd start a fire out of whatever sticks, pieces of paper and other trash he could find. The final touch to the fire was an old tire scrounged from the side of the road during his travels.

Sitting in front of a smokey, mosquito-chasing fire, perhaps cooking his favorite meal of

cabbage and chicken in an old dented can, the Goat Man would welcome any and everybody to sit and talk a spell.

With large crowds gathered around his camp, he would tell stories of his adventures, such as the time he chased a large Grizzly bear out of his camp, to when he actually fought off a band of desperadoes in Texas. Depending on what state he was in at the time, the stories might include the "fact" that he was the grandson of a famous Confederate or Yankee general.

Just who was this folklore character people called the Goat Man? Some folks said he was born Chesly McCartney in Sigourney, Iowa in the year 1901. At age fourteen, he ran off to New York City and married a twenty-four year old Spanish knife thrower named Sadie. A few years later, both moved back to Iowa and bought a farm.

McCartney claimed that during the Great Depression, he lost his farm and was forced to go to work for the W.P.A. He was working in a logging camp and while cutting a tree, it fell on him shattering his left side and pinning him to the ground for hours. Finally, a search party found him, and presuming he was dead, took the body to the local funeral home. Sometime prior to being embalmed, he regained consciousness — much to the shock of the undertaker.

Recovery took several months, leaving him with a crippled left arm, which never healed properly. Unable to work a regular job, unwilling to go on public welfare and needing a gimmick, he and his wife sewed some goat-skin clothes together, Robinson Crusoe style, for him and his son, Albert Gene, to wear.

McCartney then designed two goat skin covered wagons and together the three of them and their team of goats set off to parts unknown all around the country.

Later, he claims, Sadie grew tired of the rigors of the road, left him and Gene and returned to Iowa. Gene ended up living with his grandparents part time and the Goat Man was left on his own to continue his journey. This journey would last until 1987 and cover seven decades of traveling with his smelly goat companions, from one town to the other.

Ches McCartney looked like a gypsy mountain man who knew the secret of life but would only tell you part of it. Always with a twinkle in his eye, he seemed to be free and happy with life. This world needs a few more men like the Goat Man to transcend time and place and to take us outside of ourselves and our problems.

Next time I'll try and tell you more about this very interesting man, his rickety wagons and of course his smelly goats. Also, if you have your own story about the Goat Man, give me a call.

J.A. Bolton is a member of the N.C. Storytelling Guild, the Anson Co. Writer's Club, the Anson and Richmond Co. Historical Society and the Story Spinners in Laurinburg.

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Andrew McCarthy's Irish quests: The Haunted Bog Road

By Andrew McCarthy 9 May 2016

bbc.com



Getty Images 108938289

Andrew McCarthy's Irish quests: The Haunted Bog Road

BBC Autos invited the actor, director, travel writer and Ireland devotee to pick his favourite Emerald Isle road trips.

My headlights shine into

blackness, revealing only the thin, crooked, ungraded ribbon of tarmac disappearing into mist. There is no sign of life in any direction, only the night — and the road. The radio has lost reception. When I step out the wind is ripping. I think I can hear something through the wind, someone calling. I listen harder. I hear it again. Voices? This is the Bog Road outside Clifden, in Connemara, County Galway, in the far west of Ireland. And it's haunted.

The bodies in the bog

What's the story behind the Bog Road's ghostly repute?



some text

Ireland has perhaps more than its share of ghost stories, and few are more persistent than the grim tale of Connemara's Bog Road. As one version of the story goes, there was a hostelry here called the Halfway House. It's a mere pile of stones today, but in the 1790s, it was run by a brother and sister who made a business of welcoming solo travellers and then murdering them (at the stroke of midnight, naturally) and pocketing their belongings. It is believed to be ghosts of these hapless victims — whose bodies

the ghoulish siblings fed to the windswept bogland — that give this lonely stretch of road its spectral reputation. —*Matthew Phenix*

Not far from Ballyconneely, off R341, near Ballinaboy, just before the bridge, it stretches just a few miles, but the Bog Road is one of the most fearsome drives in the Auld Sod.

"I was giving a lift to two old fellas who insisted that they would get out of the car if I turned down the Bog Road," Roundstone local Malachy Kearns assured me, shaking his mighty head. "Who am I to say?"

Clodagh Foyle of Clifden agreed. "People say it's haunted. Folks do drive off the road a good bit. I wouldn't be driving it at night, and certainly not alone."

Yet here I am. A large boulder creates a hulking blackness beside the road in the moonless, starless night. I know the mountains of the Twelve Bens are looming off to my right, but I can't see them. For a long while I stare into the abyss. The drizzling rain stops. It's then that I get out of my car and feel the wind and think I hear someone's call. Then I'm sure I hear it again.

Tales of spirits, leprechauns and fairies are legend in Ireland; and of course no one believes in them anymore—but the night is long and dark, the wind is calling up the past, and the hair on the back of my neck is standing on end. I climb back into the car, press the clutch and take the long way round.



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(Credit: Alamy)



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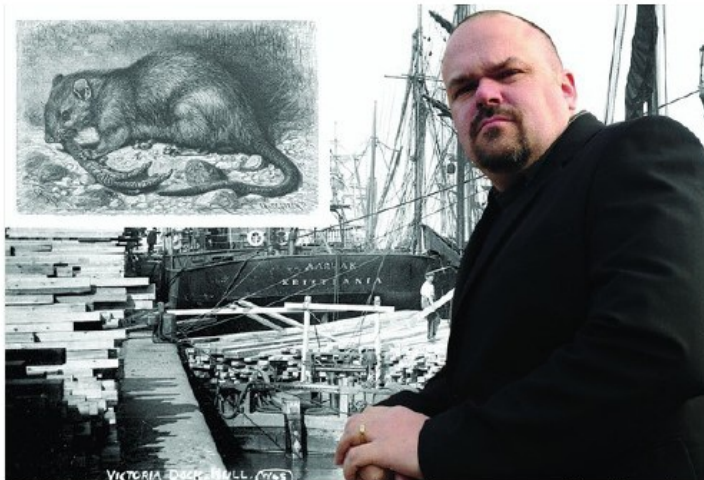
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Hull's plague ship: The panic over 'cursed' SS Friary

May 19th 2016

hulldailymail.co.uk

By Hull Daily Mail | Posted: September 03, 2015



OUTBREAK: Historian Mike Covell has been researching the story of the rat-infester steamer SS Friary, which brought plague to Victoria Docks in 1901.

At the dawn of the 20th century, disease arrived on a steamer in Hull. **James Burton** talks to historian **Mike Covell** about the city's plague ship.

Resting quietly at her berth in Victoria Dock, the SS Friary would not have been given a second glance by most Hull seafarers in January 1901.

But in the rat-infested bowels of the steamer, something was growing that would send shockwaves across the city.

One after another, the vessel's crew were struck down by a mysterious disease.

The cursed ship caused panic as far away as Lincolnshire.

"The SS Friary was known to many as Hull's plague ship," said historian Mike Covell, who has been researching the story.

A Cardiff-registered vessel, she had set sail from Alexandria when her captain, a Mr Birch, reported one of his crew had been taken ill and died aboard.



The loss of 30-year-old Greek seafarer Emanuel Frorgulas made a couple of lines in the Hull Daily Mail on Friday, January 11.

It was only five days later that concerns began to spread.

On January 16, the Mail reported several severe cases of illness among the crew.

Afflicted sailors were brought ashore to take respite at the nearby isolation hospital in Victoria Dock.

"The residents of Hull began to panic," Mr Covell said. "Cholera had struck the city so badly in the Victorian period, when thousands were killed, and anyone associated with the vessel was turned away for fear of the spread of disease.

"Within days, a local state of emergency was declared."

The Hull and Goole Port Sanitary Authorities called an emergency meeting, with city medics put on standby.

Its president, Alderman Evan Fraser, made a statement to try to bring the facts of the case to the public.

Hull's medical officer Dr Mason also spoke out.

He told the public those affected would be removed to isolation wards at Sutton.

Anyone succumbing to the disease would be cremated to avoid its spread, he said.

Even their families were removed to the wards.

On January 18, the Mail revealed a tug had been employed to sail out to the SS Friary with a crew of cleaners.

Their job was to disinfect it at a cost to the city of £10 every 24 hours.

The workers themselves had to sleep aboard the stricken vessel until their task was complete.

Ministers from the health department in London arrived in Hull the same day, and the crew were rounded up and put under intense observation.

All the stevedores and dockers who had worked near the ship were also collected.

It was then revealed illness had been reported on the steamer's voyage as early as January 8.

And all the while, the death toll grew.

Andrew Sarritis was diagnosed on January 12 and succumbed three days later.

He was followed by Richard Longford, Thomas Holmes, Michael Morrissey, James Sculley and Joseph Smith.

All were diagnosed with pneumonic plague and buried at the newly built Hull Corporation municipal crematorium in Hedon Road Cemetery.

Meanwhile, the authorities were grappling with the question of the SS Friary's cargo.

It was valued at £12,000 – about £688,000 in today's money.

Debate raged about whether it should be destroyed, who would be responsible for its destruction and if compensation would be owed.

There was another, even more pressing concern. The ship was filled with rats, and there were fears they could carry the disease into Hull.

"It was announced cats would be employed to remove the rats on board but then the authority had another problem," Mr Covell said.

"Could the rats infect the cats? What if a cat bit an infected rat?

"The idea they came up with was to dump the cats into the Humber."

Ripples of panic were by now spreading outwards.

The sanitary committee of the Beverley Corporation was put on alert, with an infectious diseases hospital on standby in case the outbreak spread.

Rumours even took root at Goxhill and Lindsey in Lincolnshire, when it was claimed men from the SS Friary had briefly berthed.

That gossip was soon proven false.

On January 30, it was announced the ship had been cleaned, and her cargo would be discharged onto small, lighter vessels for passage to Hull.

Today, the only remaining memorial to those who perished is a small weathered plaque, hidden away at the back of Hedon Road Cemetery in the columbarium opposite the old crematorium.

It features the names of just a handful of victims.

But still, the site serves as a chilling reminder of the time an innocent-looking ship brought death to East Yorkshire.

4 comments

- LizaVB50 | September 04 2015, 3:15PM

Thank you for this story: I love reading pieces from the histories of our cities, and this one is a reminder that our (comparative) freedom from diseases is a pretty recent thing.

• alfienoakes | September 03 2015, 4:57PM

Woaaa, It's like a modern day Dracula it is, what next ? Frankenstein on Ferensway, The Wolfman at Woodmansey, Zombie's sitting begging outside of Jackson, high on crack,,, - sadly the last comment is true. Drugs blighting all of our streets, Please save our kids.

• Alf_Bates | September 03 2015, 1:20PM

I can remember something similar happening to me. When I was a very small lad I went out on my great uncle's boat. Now I can't remember much about the experience as I was very young at the time but this boat I went on was not over run with rats as such but was over run with crabs. They was all over the boat and I think I might have got nipped off of one or two of them. I can't remember much more about it but it terrified me and in some way my story here from many a year ago is a bit similar to this story in that it involves a boat being over run with creatures that are not very nice and they will do you harm if you give them the chance and don't get them sorted out quick. I can't say what happened to all them crabs but the thought of them still sends a shiver down my spine to this very day.

• AndyHull1 | September 03 2015, 10:43AM

Love reading the history of Hull, wish there was more info in the libraries.

• UrbanReader1 | September 03 2015, 9:16AM

For more information on plague see <http://tinyurl.com/npej5cc>

• consort14 | September 03 2015, 8:54AM

very interesting story....



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The Rabbit of Doom - Haunted Ohio Books

hauntedohiobooks.com

<http://hauntedohiobooks.com/news/the-rabbit-of-doom/>
 Retrieved on April 21st 2016 8:51pm PST USA

This is the official website of the 7-volume Haunted Ohio series and the Ghosts of the Past series by Ohio author Chris Woodyard

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The Rabbit of Doom



The Rabbit of Doom. Skeleton of a Rabbit, Hendrik I. Hondius, 1626

I have been enjoying Dr Beachcombing's recent series of posts on bogie-bunnies: the dread Baum-Rappit, a ghost-rabbit as big as a sheep, and the Hare of the Dobbie of Furness. In tribute to his consummate collection of coneys, I offer this Rabbit of Doom.

SUPERSTITION.

A Vision of a White Rabbit and its Consequences.

[From the New Albany Commercial, 30th.]

We are not superstitious, and have no faith in signs. Neither do we, as a general rule, mundanely believe in ghosts, spirits, or things of such immaterial natures, notwithstanding the wonderful stories that frequently come to us of the doings of these supposed wonders. But there are people who actually believe in ghosts. There are those who believe that the breaking of a looking-glass, the fluttering into the house of a bird, the hooting on the roof of an owl, are certain "signs"

of the death of some one of the household. It's an old superstition, and will probably always have believers.

A gentleman of this city, whose veracity is beyond question, narrates to us the following particulars of a singular apparition that was witnessed in the lower end of the city not long ago. A mechanic had arisen about four o'clock in the morning to go to his work. On stepping out of his yard into the street, he discovered, just in front of him, what he supposed to be a white rabbit, very white and clean and appearance.

The supposed rabbit was close to him, and he concluded to pick it up and carry it into his house. He reached out his hand to seize it; but it suddenly leaped away and stopped near the middle of the street. The man again approached it, and again tried to seize it, but once more the supposed rabbit ran away to the opposite side of the street, squatting upon the pavement. The man, determined to catch it, pursued; but upon his again reaching out to take hold of it, the singular creature ran across the street again and took its position upon the door-step of the house of the man's neighbor.

The gentleman followed it, and approaching within easy reach, stopped over to pick it up, when suddenly and mysteriously it disappeared, and was not seen afterwards. The door was behind it and the pavement in front. There was no opening for it to enter, and the gentleman stoutly avers that it "vanished into thin air."

A few days after and the little child of the man upon whose doorstep the supposed white rabbit rested and from which it so mysteriously disappeared, died. We do not know what

connection there is between death and the supposed little white rabbit. But the man who witnessed the strange scene we have described, and was one of the actors in it, thinks that a little white angel strayed away from the upper and beautiful world and came in the form of a little white rabbit to seek out some pure, little white soul in this troublous world of ours, that it might be transplanted up above in the beautiful garden of heaven, where there is no temptation or sickness, or death. The little innocent of his neighbor has gone to that heavenly land.

We do not doubt that good angels do come to earth, and hover over the couches of the good while death is doing its work, and when that work is wrought to bear away upon their golden wings, to the land of joy and rest, the spirit set free from its tenement of clay. *The Cincinnati [OH] Daily Enquirer* 4 December 1868: p. 3

I, of course, being well-grounded in the realities of Victorian death, do not for a minute believe that that sentimental twaddle about the little white rabbit being an angel to waft the little white soul—hippety-hoppety!—to the Heavenly garden. It was, purely and simply, an omen of death, as are so many disappearing animals: the strange black birds heard fluttering in a grave vault, the disappearing butterfly, the white rabbit chased, but never caught by miners at Wheal Vor [Cornwall], believed to presage bad accidents. “Miners solemnly declare that they have chased these appearances till they were hemmed in with no possible way of escape—and yet they got away.” [*The Occult Review* November 1915]

While there is a well-known theme in ghost-lore of a witness seeing a seemingly living person who then disappears and is found to have died before seen, where do disappearing animals fit in? Are they pet psychopomps?

Any other Rabbits of Doom? Or, for that matter, *any* disappearing, preferably uncommon, animals as tokens of death? chriswoodyard8 AT gmail.com, whose cup of joy would overflow to find a Sloth or Goldfish of Doom.

Chris Woodyard is the author of *The Victorian Book of the Dead*, *The Ghost Wore Black*, *The Headless Horror*, *The Face in the Window*, and the 7-volume *Haunted Ohio* series. She is also the chronicler of the adventures of that amiable murderess Mrs Daffodil in *A Spot of Bother: Four Macabre Tales*. The books are available in paperback and for Kindle. Indexes and fact sheets for all of these books may be found by searching hauntedohiobooks.com. Join her on FB at Haunted Ohio by Chris Woodyard or The Victorian Book of the Dead.

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Witchcraft in Japan: The Roots of Magical Girls

japanistas.com



Japanistas

Alicia Joy 04/06/2016 Japanese Culture

When most people think of witches, they think of women in black cloaks with pointy hats, maybe a broomstick. And of course, no witch is

complete without her familiar – an animal guide which assists them while they practice magic or witchcraft. In western mythology, witches are thought to gain their power through worshipping malevolent spirits like the Devil. But in Japan, the concept of familiars defines witchcraft, because they are the source of the witches' power.



65500_witchcraft_japan

Just like in the West, people in pre-modern Japan often explained phenomena like illness, floods and other misfortunes with evil spirits. In Japan's case, these evil spirits were thought to take the shape of animals: dogs, badgers, and especially foxes. These **tsukimono** (憑き物, "possessing beings") took possession of people in their search for food or other creature comforts. When they did so, bad luck, illness, and other misfortunes befell the possessed and those around them.



Witch and Tsukimono

Witch and tsukimono on an old card game.

Alternatively, some people weren't possessed by tsukimono but kept them as pets or familiars. It is these people who are considered witches. Having tsukimono was usually a family affair. Families who owned tsukimono were known as *tsukimono-suji* (憑き物筋) or *tsukimono-zukai* (憑き物使い). In these cases, the tsukimono could have a beneficial impact on their handlers, bringing wealth and prosperity. And on the flip side, they were thought to bring illness and bad luck to anyone the owners dislike. This resulted in the families being feared and respected, but also ostracized.

People were hesitant to do business with such a family, and they had trouble selling property. In addition,

the tsukimono were inheritable through the female line, making it nearly impossible for these women to find husbands. Tsukimono could not be disinherited or disowned, but one could attempt exorcisms with a Shinto priest, female medium or other spirit specialists. In Tohoku and Kyushu prefectures, religious practitioners and not families were thought to wield tsukimono. So these people could not only cure you of tsukimono possession but curse you with it, too.



A SCENE OF SORCERY.

A Japanese scene of sorcery

Tsukimono and their masters.

Often these *tsukimono-suji* were simply wealthier than their neighbors. When jealous tongues started wagging and the rumors stuck, the family would be marked forever. As in Europe and America, being accused of this sort of witchcraft had

a negative impact on the families' lives. Nevertheless, belief in these tsukimono was widespread. Cases of spirit possession as late as 1997 have been recorded.

In Japan, witchcraft wasn't exclusive to women, although it's interesting to note that the tsukimono are passed down generation to generation through the female line. This seems to affirm a widespread global belief that women are more capable of – and likely to be involved in – witchcraft.

Perhaps predictably, cats also feature in Japanese witch stories. Hundreds of years ago, it was a common belief that girls who visited a temple after the sun went down risked being targeted by a witch. The witch, disguised as a kindly old woman, would lure the girl to her house with the promise of a warm bed for the night. Once inside, the witch would resume her ordinary, frightening form and promptly devour the girl. And because cats often hung around temples, it was believed that they were witches in disguise, waiting for their next victim.

A cat witch as they

appear at temples.

Today, a witch can be good or evil, and not always as self-serving as our ancestors believed. Japan's magical girls have come a long way from their spirit-wielding roots and are hardly seen as evildoers but rather as guardians and protectors. Looking at certain prominent anime and manga that feature magical girls, one will notice that there's always some sort of familiar either bestowing the magical gift upon the protagonists or, at least, helping out with it.

Luna from Pretty Guardian Sailor moon is an excellent example for a pop culture tsukimono. It is the cat who gives the Sailor Senshi their powers in the form of brooches, scepters, and other magical items. While the girls come into their own as the story progresses and learn to wield their powers by themselves, the initial source was Luna, their familiar.

Source: sailormoon.wikia.com



Source:
radiantdreamer.net

A not-so-friendly example is, of course, the notorious Kyubei from Puella Magi Madoka Magica. With promises of wish-fulfillment, this creature also fits the description of a tsukimono that is the source of magical powers – without Kyubei, magical girls

Cat Witch



Luna



Kyubey

wouldn't exist.

Examples of Japanese witchcraft are manifold, whether they're found in legends of old or on the afternoon's TV program. Don't be fooled into believing that witchcraft is generally a source of evil and wickedness – it all depends on how the witches and wizards choose to use their powers.

Last update 06/04/2016

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The Soggy Remains of The Pines

wordpress.com

Posted on October 19, 2015 By Chad Abramovich



Logo



Last weekend, I took a road trip with a friend to The Borscht Belt, a tongue-in-cheek colloquial moniker given to an area of New

Vintage Postcard of The Pines, circa 1960s. via cardcow.com The Persian Room, the nightclub and theater at The Pines, now demolished. via cardcow.com The Pines' kidney shaped outdoor pool with concrete bridge. via cardcow.com Indoor Pool, now demolished. via cardcow.com Indoor/outdoor skating rink. The Pines was one of the early resorts to use artificial snow making in the area. Now demolished. via cardcow.com Oof. A Very dated guest room at The Pines, circa 1960. Those sheets look pretty interesting, how they are designed to fold snugly around the shape of the bed and over the pillows, like housekeeping wanted to make sure you had the most sanitized night sleep of any hotel you've stayed at. via <http://uglymotelrooms.blogspot.com/> The first building we came upon was the former club house on the golf course, a cool mid century building with an angled roof line. The building was two stories, and housed locker rooms and a pro shop. The interior was strewn with soggy insulation and broken glass, skis and ski boots, golf bags and pairs of cleats, and a weird pile of plastic leis in the basement. Next up, the two story Regency wing. The dark interiors were a ruined and spongy creation of hip 1970s avocado pallets. All that remains of The Persian Room, the former night club and theater. In the 1990s, convention centers were becoming Catskills de rigueur, so many hotels, including The Pines, built them up on their properties. One of the catwalks that connected the many buildings of the hotel together, so guests could get from place to place in convenient comfort. The soggy remains of the lobby. The entire carpet had grown a lawn of moss and plant life, and the eerie sound of dripping water through rotten ceiling tile was the only sound that could be heard in the otherwise silent building. One of the former bars of the spacious two story lobby. This reminds me of a story I read somewhere on the internet a while back (whose source I've forgotten). Years ago, an explorer who was visiting The Pines found some Zima's in a refrigerator that had clearly not been refrigerated for years. For some reason, they drank all 6 of them. About a year later, they were at a party, and a girl opened a fresh Zima. In horror, they discovered that Zima were supposed to be clear in color. Though not drinking suspicious beverages left at an abandoned location is exploring 101 for me, I strangely know a few people who have done this and were absolutely okay with it. I love adventures, but that's a bit more adventurous than I want. What remained of the restaurant. There was quite a bit of leftover evidence of a paintball game that had happened here. But that got me questioning. The floors here were more hole than not, with us stumbling into several occasions when we discovered that the carpet was the only thing preventing us from falling down into the basement. How the hell did they play paintball



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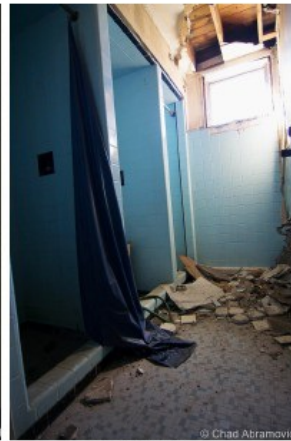
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Next up, the two story Regency wing.



The dark interiors were a ruined and spongy creation of hip 1970s avocado pallets.



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All that remains of The Persian Room, the former night club and theater.



In the 1990s, convention centers were becoming Catskills de rigueur, so many hotels, including The Pines, built them up on their properties.



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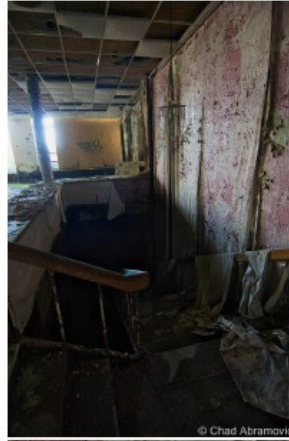


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One of the catwalks that connected the many buildings of the hotel together, so guests could get from place to place in convenient comfort.



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© Chad Abramovich

The soggy remains of the lobby. The entire carpet had grown a lawn of moss and plant life, and the eerie sound of dripping water through rotten ceiling tile was the only sound that could be heard in the otherwise silent building.



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One of the former bars of the spacious two story lobby. This reminds me of a story I read somewhere on the internet a while back (whose source I've forgotten). Years ago, an explorer who was visiting The Pines found some Zima's in a refrigerator that had clearly not been refrigerated for years. For some reason, they drank all 6 of them.

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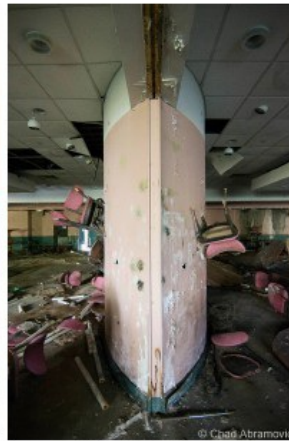


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here?? The massive kitchen was lit up generously by lots of skylights. Straight ahead is the Essex building. The dark space underneath is where guests would have driven under upon arrival. The Savoy Wing was a kitschy experience of psychedelia, with shag carpeting, red and pink walls, and guestrooms outfitted with mirrored walls and faux window treatments. Excessive water damage and clogged gutters allowed years of water to pour down through the ceilings and eventually lead to a large collapse in the center of the building. The first thing I saw as I bushwhacked my way onto the property was the area below the former landmark outdoor pool, which is a ruined storage area of poolside lawn chairs and boilers completely ruined by corrosion. The Olympic sized outdoor pool. This hotel was famous for it back in the day, and it's remote positioning at a far flung and overgrown corner of the 1,200 acre grounds make it a mostly missed site for visitors. The eeriness of the property was unshakable as I walked around. The ugly and dated buildings were reduced to indignant and unsettling billboards that reckless destruction wrote. All the windows were broken, the doors and walls kicked in. A fetid stench was the first thing I noticed long before I tromped under the coolness of the building shadows, a stagnant foul entity that permeated around the entire property. I actually had reservations going inside, which was a startling sentiment than my eager mood I was conducting a few minutes ago. It felt like I was being watched the entire time I was there. Creeping down the dark hallway with my mag-light in front of my like a weapon, my feet sinking into some unknown mush, my friend suddenly stiffed up, motioned for me to push up against what was left of a hole filled wall, and pointed at this guest room as my hand went for my knife. "See that stuff? I think someone was here, very very recently. He may still be around..." Thankfully, we didn't run into anyone who left behind a new looking sleeping bag and a pack of cigarettes. But I didn't stick around. What would have been a foyer off the grand ballroom, now a mess of a structure with collapsing floors that fall into the blackness of whatever is below. What might just be the most recognized building of the Catskills is an abandoned 1960s wing of the hotel, which also happens to be the tallest on the property. In the 80s, the hotel was losing money, so the idea was to build a new resort – a bigger, better showpiece! But the gaudy, shopping mall-esque editions that were going up around the more traditional buildings only differentiated from the place. But their ambitious new image wouldn't save them, and the whole resort closed in 1986 when it, and the Catskills fell out of style. This would have been the new lobby, halted and abandoned in mid construction. These 5 rotting bar stools are a photographic icon of this property. At one point, there were more of them, and they were all standing in a row lining the bar that they once accompanied. Today, only these 5 remain, barely. An old beauty salon chair, located down in dank and dark levels below, seemed to have been dragged outside and left out near the bar. Another wing of the property, which looked almost identical to all the other buildings now in their incarnation of wasteland and mystery.

York's Catskills Mountains interspersed with decaying hotels from a bygone era. In the 20th century, the Jewish community from New York City were being battered with a growing antisemitism movement which barred them from many mainstream hotels and vacation destinations. That well realized awareness encouraged them to build a destination of their own, and the Catskill Mountains a few hours north of New York City became their prospective topography that would be superimposed with lots and lots of blueprints.

Many establishments started out as simple farmhouses that offered hearty meals and a place to sleep, attracting city dwellers with mountain views instead of glass and steel, scented mountain air instead of smog, and noises other than the sound of a city crawling with bodies. Other early attempts at tourism capitalized on the mineral springs fashion of the Victorian age. It seemed like these investments were working, because towards the 1930s, the area began to turn celebrity. Smaller establishments



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© Chad Abramovich

The massive kitchen was lit up generously by lots of skylights.



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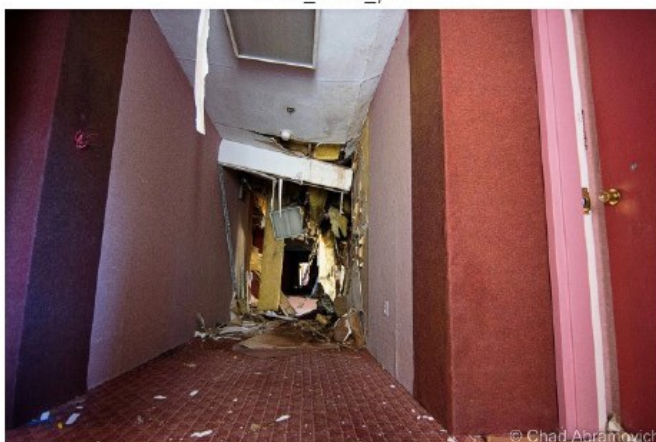
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Straight ahead is the Essex building. The dark space underneath is where guests would have driven under upon arrival.



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The Savoy Wing was a kitschy experience of psychedelia, with shag carpeting, red and pink walls, and guestrooms outfitted with mirrored walls and faux window treatments. Excessive water damage and clogged gutters allowed years of water to pour down through the ceilings and eventually lead to a large collapse in the center of the building.



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The first thing I saw as I bushwhacked my way onto the property was the area below the former landmark outdoor pool, which is a ruined storage area of poolside lawn chairs and boilers completely ruined by corrosion.



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The Olympic sized outdoor pool. This hotel was famous for it back in the day, and it's remote positioning at a far flung and overgrown corner of the 1,200 acre grounds make it a mostly missed site for visitors.



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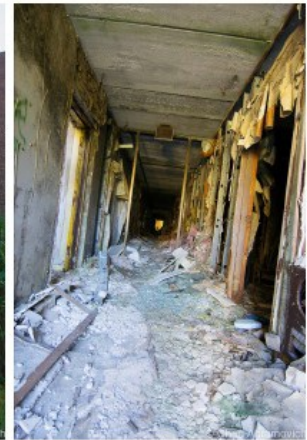
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What would have been a foyer off the grand ballroom, now a mess of a structure with collapsing floors that fall into the blackness of whatever is below.



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What might just be the most recognized building of the Catskills is an abandoned 1960s wing of the hotel, which also happens to be the tallest on the property.



In the 80s, the hotel was losing money, so the idea was to build a new resort – a bigger, better showpiece! But the gaudy, shopping mall-esque editions that were going up around the more traditional buildings only differentiated from the place. But their ambitious new image wouldn't save them, and the whole resort closed in 1986 when it, and the Catskills fell out of style. This would have been the new lobby, halted and abandoned in mid construction.



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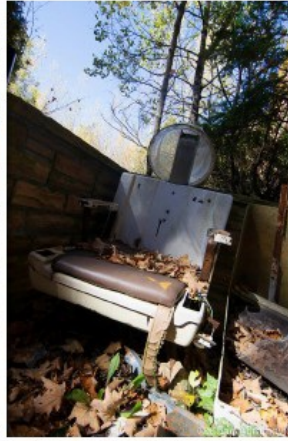


These 5 rotting bar stools are a photographic icon of this property. At one point, there were more of them, and they were all standing in a row lining the bar that they once accompanied. Today, only these 5 remain, barely.



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An old beauty salon chair, located down in dank and dark levels below, seemed to have been dragged outside and left out near the bar.



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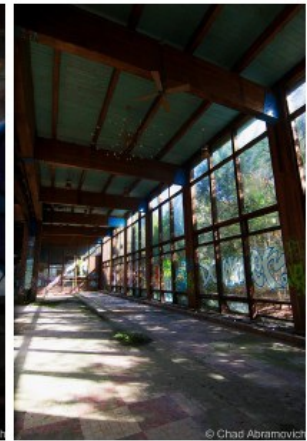
Another wing of the property, which looked almost identical to all the other buildings now in their incarnation of wasteland and mystery.

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expanded as new hotels would be envisioned. Soon, a rather long and boundary debatable cluster of small hardscrabble towns began to become destination communities as lavish all-inclusive resort hotels began to spread out on former farms or woodlots. As time progressed, some places began so popular that private air strips were being envisioned so they could accommodate a predicted increase of air travel from the city. The most revered appeal of the Catskills was that many of these resorts offered upper class amenities and made them accessible to folks that normally couldn't afford those luxuries.

The Pines was one of those hotels, once beloved now moldering in the tiny and depressed little hamlet of South Fallsburg. Existing since 1933, The Pines wasn't one of the largest Borscht Belt resorts, but it was arguably one of its grandest. It grew to offer 400 rooms, a golf course, tennis courts, indoor and outdoor pools, a ski chalet and trails, an indoor skating rink, conference rooms and a night club, and restaurant and bar. Its once lavish theater hosted the usual Jewish Alps (another Catskills epithet) entertainers of the day such as Buddy Hackett and Robert Goulet.

The Catskills popularity found its pivot point during the 1970s, when cheap air travel could take people to other places for around the same price as a trip upstate. Now, people could go to Florida or Europe and didn't need to settle for the Catskills. Ironically, even the Adirondacks, the loftier and bumpier part of upstate New York, were still increasing in popularity, leaving the Catskills to corrode in rust and sorrow. The Pines' story seems to end like most of these stories do. The sprawling hotel was sold in 1998 and bought by The Fallsburg Estates LLC, who wished to revitalize the 96 acre property and, in addition to revamping the ski hill and golf course, build shiny new condos over the ramshackle hotel. But by 2002, they filed for bankruptcy, which is consequently why the hotel is in the deplorable and vulnerable state it's in today.

The remnants of the Catskill craze are still around, even if the craze isn't. Today, the region is littered with abandoned properties – fantasies of blight whose visages bear slovenly expressions that welcome vandals, explorers, arsonists, scrappers and teenagers who are excited by the prospect of a paintball game or a place to drink cheap beer.

Arriving in South Fallsburg, I felt awkward driving around its deserted residential streets. Much of the area looks strangely incongruous, like a mockup community built by the government during the cold war that was awaiting the detonation of a nuclear bomb. The weird inner city like apartment blocks sitting in the woods were oddly desolate and forlorn looking.

Hiking up through the woods on a great 63 degree October afternoon, myself and my friend soon found ourselves staring at the brooding and ugly ruins of what was left of The Pines, and there wasn't all that much. I had come a bit late, after its exploration heyday it seems, leaving me with what remained of its rotting bones. The old hotel was absolutely trashed, being inside was like stepping into a rotting cave. The perpetually soggy carpets and dripping water immediately soaked my boots and the air was absolutely foul without a mask. Some levels had entirely collapsed, while other wings were more hole than floor. Moss, mold and plant life grew wild on the the carpets and walls. Some rooms were completely destroyed, while others were strange enclaves of preservation, the difference at times depended on which side of the hallway you were on. Mimicking the residual motions of the long gone guests, I spent several hours walking around its dark passages, feeling disparate nostalgia for a time I never even lived through.

Scrappers had ransacked the surviving sordid buildings for any valuable materials they could rip out of the walls or ceilings. Evidence of squatters camps could be found in a few rooms, which was a real poignant and sobering sentiment that there are some who do spend the night in this grim place, leprous with mold, rot and water damage that was beginning to make entire buildings buckle and bend

as sections begin to lose their ability to do what they were designed to do.

A few different arson attempts were successful around 2003 and 2007, and consumed a few smaller outbuildings. Later, the indoor pool, famous theater and indoor skating rink were razed, with an implied intent that the rest of the property was soon to follow. But demolition was halted, and the property sits in perishing limbo, somewhere between what it once was, and whatever it's turning into.



Vintage Postcard of The Pines, circa 1960s. via cardcow.com



The Persian Room, the nightclub and theater at The Pines, now demolished. via cardcow.com



The Pines' kidney shaped outdoor pool with concrete bridge. via cardcow.com

Here is a promo made around the 1980s I found on Youtube, to give you an idea of what this place used to be like.

My talented friends at Antiquity Echoes made this great edit of their exploration to The Pines a few years ago, and their thoughtful camerawork shows much of the hotel that has long vanished.

Autumn just makes road trips better. Driving north towards Middleburgh, we were immersed deep within the surprisingly vast destitution of the Catskill Park Wilderness, which meant driving on curvy paved back roads around beaver meadows and rolling hills all dying in a brilliant uniform yellow for several hours, occasionally passing through a small town that was a collection of unmaintained old houses and maybe a church, but no gas stations, grocery stores, bars, or really anywhere to shop for what I at least consider important things like gas and groceries. Another noticeable difference between the Catskills and Vermont, besides the singular foliage color of yellow, was that while I may encounter 3 deer wandering out into the middle of the road in 3 years in Vermont, in the Catskills, we had to slam on our breaks for 8 deer in a single day. Yes I was counting.

Eventually, we happened upon a state park and camped out for the night on the last available night of the state park season. The temperature dropped into the teens and I was kept awake all night by wailing coyotes and things that scampered through the dead leaves around my tent. But with a cozy campfire and some microbrews bought at nearby Middleburgh; a startling and mood improving oasis of blue collar businesses and a Christmas light covered main street, it was a great night. The next morning, I was as

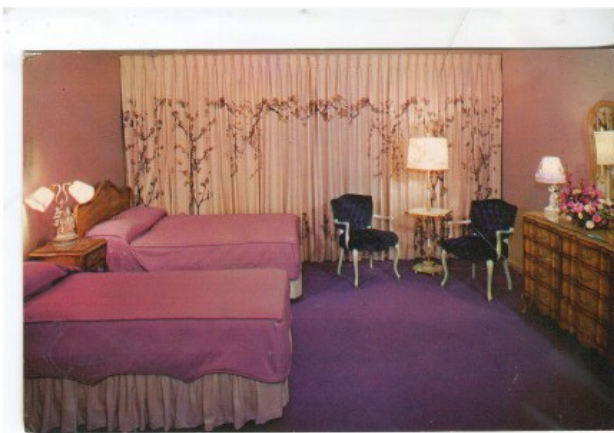
rested as sleeping on a tent pitched on a gravel bed in 18 degree weather would get me, and we were



Indoor Pool, now demolished. via cardcow.com



Indoor/outdoor skating rink. The Pines was one of the early resorts to use artificial snow making in the area. Now demolished. via cardcow.com



explorers, photographers and curious visitors all around the east coast. A visit here jestingly pushes your explorer legitimacy card. Just before I walked in with my camera, a bunch of teenagers were just finishing shooting a music video here.

The scariest part of my visit here was actually trying to leave, when walking back to the car, me and my friend were inducted into a circumstantial game of face off with a very vicious dog, who was creating a raucous of barking and snarling at our presence walking down a quiet back road with our cameras. After about 20 minutes or so of keeping our tentative distance and wondering if he was going to dash off the front lawn in our direction if we got any closer, it walked around the back of the house and oddly,

off.

About 20 minutes from The Pines sat another enormous abandonment where I briefly stopped to photograph. This hotel was legendary, and was arguably *the* hotel that became the representation of the region, growing to a size of 35 buildings on 1,200 acres. In 1952, it would enter it's place in worldly accolades as the first place that used artificial snow making on it's ski slopes.

So large was this property that a private airstrip was once constructed to handle predicted private aircraft traffic that never came. The hotel's rise and fall echoes The Pines own tragedy, and became a ghost just as fast as it triumphed. Today, the property is a victim to one of the grimmest truths of reality. It's so deplorable after two decades of raving and destruction that it's disgusting ruins were sadly a disappointment to walk through – a sad fall and postmortem.

That is, expect for it's extraordinary natatorium.

The mid-century marvel was under the weight of it's silence, not even the birds were chirping as I walked around the massive space. Though the electricity was shut off decades ago, the atrium's great design ensured the place was nicely lit up by plenty of skylights in-between some striking starburst chandelier style light fixtures from the 1950s that were still shockingly preserved . Walking around coats your boots in slick sludge and stubble white mold that has been reclaiming the buckling pool tiles. The pool itself is a chaise lounge graveyard, tossed into some murky filth and curating rot that has collected in the Olympic sized pool's deep end.

This place has achieved legendary status for



disappeared. We waited another five minutes or so, and finally decided we were going to chance moving forward. Luckily, we made it safely back to our car, our internal organs in place.

Vintage Postcard of The Pines, circa 1960s. via cardcow.com The Persian Room, the nightclub and theater at The Pines, now demolished. via cardcow.com The Pines' kidney shaped outdoor pool with concrete bridge. via cardcow.com Indoor Pool, now demolished. via cardcow.com Indoor/outdoor skating rink. The Pines was one of the early resorts to use artificial snow making in the area. Now demolished. via cardcow.com Oof. A Very dated guest room at The Pines, circa 1960. Those sheets look pretty interesting, how they are designed to fold snugly around the shape of the bed and over the pillows, like housekeeping wanted to make sure you had the most sanitized night sleep of any hotel you've stayed at. via <http://uglymotelrooms.blogspot.com/> The first building we came upon was the former club house on the golf course, a cool mid century building with an angled roof line. The building was two stories, and housed locker rooms and a pro shop. The interior was strewn with soggy insulation and broken glass, skis and ski boots, golf bags and pairs of cleats, and a weird pile of plastic leis in the basement. Next up, the two story Regency wing. The dark interiors were a ruined and spongy creation of hip 1970s avocado pallets. All that remains of The Persian Room, the former night club and theater. In the 1990s, convention centers were becoming Catskills de rigueur, so many hotels, including The Pines, built them up on their properties. One of the catwalks that connected the many buildings of the hotel together, so guests could get from place to place in convenient comfort. The soggy remains of the lobby. The entire carpet had grown a lawn of moss and plant life, and the eerie sound of dripping water through rotten ceiling tile was the only sound that could be heard in the otherwise silent building. One of the former bars of the spacious two story lobby. This reminds me of a story I read somewhere on the internet a while back (whose source I've forgotten). Years ago, an explorer who was visiting The Pines found some Zima's in a refrigerator that had clearly not been refrigerated for years. For some reason, they drank all 6 of them. About a year later, they were at a party, and a girl opened a fresh Zima. In horror, they discovered that Zima were supposed to be clear in color. Though not drinking suspicious beverages left at an abandoned location is exploring 101 for me, I strangely know a few people who have done this and were absolutely okay with it. I love adventures, but that's a bit more adventurous than I want. What remained of the restaurant. There was quite a bit of leftover evidence of a paintball game that had happened here. But that got me questioning. The floors here were more hole than not, with us stumbling into several occasions when we discovered that the carpet was the only thing preventing us from falling down into the basement. How the hell did they play paintball here?? The massive kitchen was lit up generously by lots of skylights. Straight ahead is the Essex building. The dark space underneath is where guests would have driven under upon arrival. The Savoy Wing was a kitschy experience of psychedelia, with shag carpeting, red and pink walls, and guestrooms outfitted with mirrored walls and faux window treatments. Excessive water damage and clogged gutters

allowed years of water to pour down through the ceilings and eventually lead to a large collapse in the center of the building. The first thing I saw as I bushwhacked my way onto the property was the area below the former landmark outdoor pool, which is a ruined storage area of poolside lawn chairs and boilers completely ruined by corrosion. The Olympic sized outdoor pool. This hotel was famous for it back in the day, and it's remote positioning at a far flung and overgrown corner of the 1,200 acre grounds make it a mostly missed site for visitors. The eeriness of the property was unshakable as I walked around. The ugly and dated buildings were reduced to indignant and unsettling billboards that reckless destruction wrote. All the windows were broken, the doors and walls kicked in. A fetid stench was the first thing I noticed long before I tromped under the coolness of the building shadows, a stagnant foul entity that permeated around the entire property. I actually had reservations going inside, which was a startling sentiment than my eager mood I was conduiting a few minutes ago. It felt like I was being watched the entire time I was there. Creeping down the dark hallway with my mag-light in front of my like a weapon, my feet sinking into some unknown mush, my friend suddenly stiffed up, motioned for me to push up against what was left of a hole filled wall, and pointed at this guest room as my hand went for my knife. "See that stuff? I think someone was here, very very recently. He may still be around..." Thankfully, we didn't run into anyone who left behind a new looking sleeping bag and a pack of cigarettes. But I didn't stick around. What would have been a foyer off the grand ballroom, now a mess of a structure with collapsing floors that fall into the blackness of whatever is below. What might just be the most recognized building of the Catskills is an abandoned 1960s wing of the hotel, which also happens to be the tallest on the property. In the 80s, the hotel was losing money, so the idea was to build a new resort – a bigger, better showpiece! But the gaudy, shopping mall-esque editions that were going up around the more traditional buildings only differentiated from the place. But their ambitious new image wouldn't save them, and the whole resort closed in 1986 when it, and the Catskills fell out of style. This would have been the new lobby, halted and abandoned in mid construction. These 5 rotting bar stools are a photographic icon of this property. At one point, there were more of them, and they were all standing in a row lining the bar that they once accompanied. Today, only these 5 remain, barely. An old beauty salon chair, located down in dank and dark levels below, seemed to have been dragged outside and left out near the bar. Another wing of the property, which looked almost identical to all the other buildings now in their incarnation of wasteland and mystery.



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Obscure Vermont

The Story of Laelaps and the Teumessian Fox in Greek Mythology

Updated on March 10, 2016

hubpages.com

The story of Laelaps and the Teumessian Fox is a tale of a paradox that appears in Greek mythology, for Laelaps was a hound destined to catch whatever it chased, whilst the Teumessian Fox was destined to never be caught.

The two creatures from Greek mythology had their own stories but in the end the two stories would converge into one.

Laelaps

The story of Laelaps begins on Crete in the time of Europa. Europa had been abducted by Zeus, so that the god could ravish her. Europa would bear Zeus three sons, Minos, Sarpedon and Rhadamanthys, but of course the god could not stay with the mortal woman on Crete, and so Zeus left her and returned to Mount Olympus.

Zeus though did not completely abandon Europa, and to his conquest he gave three gifts; Talos, the man of bronze who would guard the shoreline of Crete; a javelin which always found its mark; and Laelaps, a dog that always caught what he hunted.

Eventually, the gifts of Zeus would pass to Europa's son, Minos, the new king of Crete. Due to his indiscretions though, Minos' wife, Pasiphae, had cursed him to ejaculate poisonous snakes and scorpions.

Procris, the Athenian princess, and wife of Cephalus, would come to Crete though, during a period of separation between husband and wife. Procris managed to cure Minos of his affliction, and in gratitude, Minos presented Procris with the javelin and Laelaps.

Procris would then depart Crete, and would be reconciled with her husband, and the gifts of the javelin and Laelaps passed to Cephalus.

The Teumessian Fox

The Teumessian Fox was a gigantic fox named for Teumessus, a place near to Thebes; the Teumessian Fox was also known by some as the Cadmean Vixen, for Thebes was once called Cadmea.

Some ancient writers would say that the fox was a monstrous child of Typhon and Echidna, although this is not a universal belief, but the beast was put to use by Dionysus, who sent it to ravage Thebes and kill the children of the city.

The reason for Dionysus' anger towards Thebes is not entirely clear, as it was simply said that the city was being punished for a crime, one which perhaps dated back to the time of Cadmus.

The inhabitants of Thebes though would try and placate the Teumessian Fox by sending out a child sacrifice each month, in the hope that more children would not be taken.

Laelaps and the Teumessian Fox

The Stories Converge

It was at this time that Amphitryon, the husband of Alcmene and stepfather of Heracles, came to Thebes seeking the assistance of King Creon in a war against the Teleboians.

Creon though would only commit the forces of Thebes if Amphitryon rid Thebes of the Teumessian Fox.

Amphitryon would make a few unsuccessful attempts to hunt down the Teumessian Fox, but eventually decided that he needed to enlist the services of Laelaps.

Amphitryon would meet with Cephalus, and promised the owner of Laelaps a share of the profits from the expedition against the Teleboians. Cephalus was also in need of absolution at the time, for he had accidentally killed his wife, and some say that King Creon provided this absolution.

In any case, Cephalus and Laelaps would return to Thebes with Amphitryon, and the hound was let loose, to chase after the Teumessian Fox.

The chase went on but Laelaps could not close on the Teumessian Fox, but nor could the Teumessian Fox get clear of the hound. Zeus looked down from Mount Olympus and observed the paradox that was taking place around Thebes. Zeus decided that he could not let the chase continue on earth, and so as the fox and hound ran over the plain of Thebes, the god changed both animals into stone.

Zeus then transformed the pair into two constellations, Canis Major (Laelaps) and Canis Minor (the Teumessian Fox), and so the chase continues in the night sky.



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The Legend of the Wawel Dragon | Historic Mysteries

historicmysteries.com

HISTORIC MYSTERIES

Historic Mysteries

estronal April 9, 2016
Legends

Many cultures and ancient peoples revere and celebrate animals. The

Egyptians regarded the common domesticated cat as a deity. Snakes, dogs, elephants and birds have also become objects of worship for tribes all over the world in one form or another. Few animals can transcend all cultures and all civilizations the way that the humble dragon can. The Chinese Dragon, like the Welsh counterpart, is known the world over. Old English stories of how St George slayed the dragon are still used as prime examples of how to overcome long odds and triumph.



Image: canstockphoto

There is a fearsome dragon from one nation's folklore that isn't immediately well known outside of its borders. One of the oldest and most endearing Polish legends tells of Smok – the Wawel dragon. Wawel Hill can be found along the Vistula River in Poland and is famed because of a medieval castle and Cathedral. Not too far away stands the former Polish capital city of Krakow. This city, steeped in much of Poland's ancient history and heritage, was named after King Krak in the 7th century.

It was around this time in history when the city was a much smaller and more humble place. Many of the residents there were happy to farm the lands and swap campfire stories once the Sun had set. The more senior of the farmers would tell stories about Smok and how the dragon was evil with a lair found on the side of Wawel Hill. The entrance to this cave was obscured by brambles and general overgrowth. Anyone that found the entrance was reticent to enter it, for fear of awakening the notorious beast. Five youths decided to test this assumption and prove once and for all that all of these stories were precisely that – stories.

Ignoring the warnings from the elderly, the five armed themselves with torches and pitchforks and began their trek up the mountain. It took them quite some time to navigate the dense foliage before they found the entrance to a cave. There they stood, wondering whether or not to enter and trying to see if anything was waiting for them. Their torches only allowed them to see so far and so much, so they decided to enter after all. The inside of the cave was said to be narrow and cast grotesque shadows of themselves onto the walls. The last thing the youths wanted was to be seen abandoning their pursuit through cowardice. Onwards they continued, despite the malignant presence that they all felt. The more they ventured inside,

the greater the sense of unease began to overwhelm. From further inside the cave, they could hear something breathing. It was deep and regular. Even this didn't deter them. What finally settled things for the five was the sight of movement up ahead of them.

Something very large and covered in green scales began to stir.

Whatever they had stumbled across let out a bellowing roar and none of the five had any desire to hang around and see what the source of the noise was. So desperate was their panic to flee the scene, that they almost ran over one another to cover the largest amount of distance in the smallest amount of time. The hot breath behind them inspired them all to run, stumble, stagger and roll just that little bit harder. At the bottom of the mountain, they all felt safe enough to finally get a good look at their pursuer. Perched proudly on top of the hill they had just fled was Smok. The sharp teeth and flashing eyes that caught their attention began to head down the hill after them. Fortunately for the youths, Smok was more interested in one of the many cattle that grazed between hunter and hunted. Smok took one and returned to its lair.

Having aroused the monster, daily life in the village took a turn for the worst. Every single day, something or someone would disappear. Sometimes a sheep, sometimes another cow, sometimes one of the villagers. Efforts were made to slay the ravenous beast, but the regular posse that was formed was no match for the formidable Smok. Numerous gave their lives to try and match the monster with their primitive weapons that barely made an impact upon it.



The Wawel Dragon sculpture. Image: Mark Healey from Brough, UK (Smok Wawelski Uploaded by Yarl) [CC BY-SA 2.0]

Some of the villagers turned to a local wise man named Krakus, who was considered to be a magician. Krakus accepted their requests to help, but before doing anything he carefully considered his options. After studying his herbs, Krakus began to create a paste. Once this was done, he demanded and received a sheep to baste. Krakus escorted this animal to the mouth of Smok's lair and callously threw the poor sheep inside. Krakus and any brave witnesses remained on tenterhooks for several moments

before Smok emerged and made a beeline for the Vistula River. Krakus had covered the sheep in a concoction designed to burn the inside of Smok. Legend has it that Smok drank so much from the River that it exploded.

The villagers were so thankful that curse of their own making was vanquished, that they immediately installed Krakus as King and named the settlement after him. Magnificent structures were built in his honor and when he finally passed away, a state funeral was held. These days Krakow is immensely proud of their legend. As well as the buildings that

celebrate Krakus and his accomplishments, tourists can even signal fire from the metal dragon sculpture by texting SMOK to 7168. This is all done with natural gas in a much more controlled and safer manner than the sulfur Krakus was said to have used in his potion.

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Terrified couple draw sketch of panther spotted in England

04:25 EST, 6 April 2016 |

dailymail.co.uk



Is this the werewolf of Worcester? Terrified couple claim they came face to face with a wild 'panther' like beast during a trip to the Cotswolds and say it looks like this

- Robert and Nicola Ingram claim to have spotted big cat in Worcestershire
- Took a blurry photo but have now followed that up with accurate sketch
- Shows large cat like animal that appears to have several human features
- Panther apparently circled their car and looked as if it was going to pounce
- Sighting is the latest in a recent string of reports about a big cat in the area

A terrified couple who claim to have come face-to-face with a black panther while driving through the English countryside have drawn a sketch of the blood-thirsty beast to warn the public what to look out for. The pair saw what they are convinced was a panther while driving through Croome Court - a National Trust property - at 1am last week. They claim the black outline (circled) was as tall as their car, must have weighed around nine stone, and was ready to pounce at their vehicle before he put the foot down and they sped off. Their drawing appears to show an animal with almost human like traits: big eyes, eyebrows, a long nose and full set of teeth - sparking fears that it was not a panther but instead a werewolf. The report is the latest in a string of sightings around the Cotswolds area - none of which have been confirmed to be an exotic cat (stock photograph)

Daily Mail

MailOnline US - news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories

By Euan McLelland For MailOnline

A terrified couple who claim to have come face-to-face with a black panther while driving through the English countryside have drawn a sketch of the blood-thirsty beast to warn the

public what to look out for.

But the pencil drawing that Robert Ingram and wife Nicola have come up with is now likely to raise fears that what they encountered, rather than being a big cat, was in fact a werewolf.

Their visual interpretation appears to show an animal with almost human like traits: big eyes, eyebrows, a long nose and full set of teeth.

It also looks to hold its posture like a homosapien, far different from that of the feline they believe to have spotted.

Robert's black-and-white sketch does, however, emphasise that the animal the pair saw was covered in a hair or fur like coating, like a black panther.



It does appear to have chest hair though, which again distances the bizarre creature from the big cat more commonly found in Asia and

Africa then middle England.

The pair encountered what they are convinced was a black panther while driving through Croome Court - a National Trust property - at 1am last week.

They claim the black outline - which they took a blurry photo of - was as tall as their car window, must have weighed around nine stone, and was ready to pounce at their vehicle before he put the foot down and they sped off.

Although he and Nicola struggled to get a clear picture of the cat on camera, Robert has now produced the sketch in a bid to help cops and animal welfare officers find out what it is - and figure out how to catch it.

The incident follows a sighting in Malvern earlier this month when a woman claimed an animal 'bigger than a dog' was 'eating something fluffy'.

Robert, a full-time father-of-three, said: 'It was petrifying. It looked like it was on steroids.

'We were driving along outside the national trust property, there are lots of open fields around there, when suddenly, I spotted something in the road ahead.



'It was getting dark, but I saw its eyes reflect in my headlights.

'We stopped the car, and it was just standing there.

'We'd heard rumours about an escaped panther in the area, but we'd thought it was a load of nonsense.

'But when I saw this animal with my own eyes, I was stunned. It was enormous, far too big for a fox or a dog.

It must have weighed about 9 stone - about the same as a slim adult.

'It looked right at us and walked up to the car. It then lowered the front of its body and looked like it was going to pounce.

'We just slammed the car into reverse and went as far as we could.

I was so scared I fumbled to get my phone out to take a picture, but we'd already driven quite far away
Robert Ingram

'I was so scared I fumbled to get my phone out to take a picture, but we'd already driven quite far away.

'There was no way you were going to get me to go near it again to take a better picture. It was terrifying.'

Croome Court is an 18th century mansion built by famous architect Capability Brown. The house is owned by the National Trust and has huge sprawling grounds - where thousands of families will be gathering this school holidays.

Robert added: 'It's scary to think that there are so many kiddies around where we saw this thing.

'People go there for a fun family day out, they don't expect there to be a massive panther lurking in the bushes.

'Some of my mates have said they don't believe me, but we came face to face with this thing. We know what we saw.

Robert reckons that the beast may have escaped from a zoo. There have been dozens of claimed sightings of big cats in Worcestershire over the past few years.

Last August, Andy Richards of Cheshire was camping outside the Marlbank Inn at Welland which overlooks the Malverns spotted 'a big feline predator'.

Another mentioned sightings around Evesham when a big cat was seen with its head reaching the bottom branches of the trees.

A spokesman for Worcestershire Wildlife Trust said: 'It is always possible that there is a panther, or other big cat, in our countryside but there hasn't yet been any firm evidence to prove that they're there.'

Confusingly, black panthers in Asia and Africa are leopards and black panthers in the Americas are black jaguars.

Bob Lawrence, head of wildlife development at West Midland Safari and Leisure Park, said that no-one seemed to be able to produce a clear photograph to authenticate any sightings.



He said: 'It's extremely unlikely it is a leopard or a jaguar which is from the jungles of South America.'

'A leopard would be more likely to survive than a jaguar.'

'There has been a circus in Bromsgrove but it's a long shot that an animal has escaped from the circus.'

'But they would never let an animal go and do nothing about it.'



Comments (71)

The comments below have not been moderated.

Hecu Bagri, Sunderland, United Kingdom, 1 week ago

Did this accidentally get missed out of the April fools news stories? Or are we aiming for a homage to National Enquirer? I can see how this made the news what with the realistic and lifelike drawing. It's detail really goes towards the authenticity of their story. (for those that don't get it. Yes this is sarcasm)

The-Commentator, Minister for Common Sense, United Kingdom, 1 week ago

It's a quiet news day. The Panama papers must have been fully processed by now.

The-Commentator, Minister for Common Sense, United Kingdom, 1 week ago

The Worcestershire Constabulary are having second thoughts about the reliability of their new photo fit equipment.

The-Commentator, Minister for Common Sense, United Kingdom, 1 week ago

It's a blurred picture of a very savage bin bag.

Gnostically, Chester, 1 week ago

He wants to be careful, looks like it is sitting next to him.

Kernowlokal, Kernow, United Kingdom, 1 week ago

Well it's a slightly better representation than the picture they took. It's also a perfect advert for avoiding drugs.

Cob, Colchester, United Kingdom, 1 week ago

Yes,a werewolf 100%. An all too common danger in England at the moment. They are lucky to have escaped unharmed. I still cannot believe the detail of the drawing,you sir have talent.

Rupertbehr, York, United Kingdom, 1 week ago

..... And you Sir, have WIT ! Ha Ha

stloocardsfan, St. Louis, 1 week ago

I will be sure to keep an eye out for it and try to keep a straight face if I see it.

Rupertbehr, York, United Kingdom, 1 week ago

Not the Dreaded "Blurred Photo" again !

OSSI, Berlin, Germany, 1 week ago

is it a selfie ???

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Three people killed and 26 injured after fight broke out in cemetery over who has the right to work there



саша богино @echolalialia · May 14
хованское северное кладбище, вход

Scene of the fight outside the Khovanskoye cemetery

By: Mahesh Sarin

(Scroll down for video) Police launched an investigation after a large fight at a cemetery left three people dead and 26 people injured, according to police in Russia.

Moscow police said that the brawl broke out at the Khovanskoye cemetery, after a group of gang members descended on the property and demanded that workers share a percentage of their income with them.

Twenty-three people were hospitalized, four of them with serious injuries. So far, 90 people have been arrested. Video of the brawl shows a large number of people with rods inside the cemetery and guns were used.

According to the police investigation, around 200 people arrived at the cemetery on Saturday. The organized crime members asked workers to give them 20 percent of their income.

The workers rejected their request, claiming that they were the only people with rights to the cemetery.

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On London's notorious Ratcliffe Highway, in search of tigers and dragons

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Home » Places » UK » On London's notorious Ratcliffe Highway, in search of tigers and dragons



Jamrach's Menagerie on the Radcliffe Highway 1896

Sometimes the most remarkable stories can be found right under our noses. Nowhere does this appear to be more true than in London, where every other street hides an intriguing tale from the city's fascinating past.

Visit The Highway in east London and you'll be forgiven for

thinking there wasn't much to trouble the historians here. It's a soulless dual carriageway, noisy with the flow of non-stop traffic and lined with car showrooms and run-down flats. Yet the Ratcliffe Highway, as the road was known in Victorian times, was the undisputed centre of depravity and debauchery in 19th century London, and a few clues of the area's lurid past remain for those willing to dig around.

Ships would end their lengthy voyages at nearby Wapping and when their work was done the seamen would collect their pay before finding the nearest source of entertainment. The Ratcliffe Highway had everything a man who'd spent months at sea could want, with ale and gin houses, brothels and opium dens all set up and ready to relieve sailors of all nationalities of their hard-earned cash.

This old song perhaps paints a picture of life on the Ratcliffe Highway as well as any words alone could do:

The area was home to countless fights and regular riots, so much so that the newly formed Metropolitan Police had to take special precautions in patrolling the Ratcliffe Highway, with few policemen daring to walk the street alone.

Among all the seediness and crime the road was also home to the more curious side of London life, perhaps best exemplified by the strange goings-on at Jamrach's Animal Emporium at number 180. The Jamrach family were among the world's leading animal traders of the 19th century and when Charles Jamrach took over his father's business and set up shop on the Ratcliffe Highway in 1840, the rich and famous would come to him to order their exotic pets. Lions, tigers, rare birds were popular purchases and Charles had a network of suppliers around the world who could get their hands on pretty much any species.

It was from Jamrach's shop in Ratcliffe Highway that a Bengal tiger escaped in 1857 and picked up a curious young boy with his teeth, carrying him off before Charles Jamrach wrestled the unharmed boy from the tiger's mouth. This remarkable story forms the backdrop to the novel *Jamrach's Menagerie* by Carol Birch, and it is as a direct result of reading this wonderful book that I was keen to explore the site of the old Ratcliffe Highway and see what I could find of the characters' colourful world.

To my delight I found there is even a statue of a boy and a tiger to commemorate the famous episode in

the street's history. It's in Tobacco Dock, a busy unloading spot in the Victorian times of Jamrach and now a cavernous events venue; it's marvellous how history and fiction so easily merge.



Jamrach's Menagerie

As for the Highway itself, there is the occasional old-fashioned sign but little else on the surface to offer any clues as to its previous notoriety; the city planners and the Luftwaffe did a good job in clearing up this part of London's dirty past.

Walk along today's Highway and you might find yourself keen to move on to somewhere more appealing with more obvious places of interest. But if you read Carol Birch's book I'll guarantee you'll want to dig around to find the streets, the bars and the shops that feature in her Victorian adventure novel. Now that, for me, is the real power of a good book.

Author Information

Posted by: Andy Jarosz

Post Information

Posted on: November 19, 2012

Posted in: UK

2 Responses to "On London's notorious Ratcliffe Highway, in search of tigers and dragons"

1. Jen #

Learn something new everyday, great post. I like your blog too

November 27, 2012 at 4:43 am

2. Andy Tope #

Nice post Andy, you've also inspired me to give Jamrach's Menagerie a read. So much to discover about London.

November 27, 2012 at 6:20 am

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Time Capsule From 1889 Discovered In Demolished Humboldt Park Church

Updated on May 18, 2016 12:43pm

dnainfo.com



Humboldt Park Time Capsule

HUMBOLDT PARK — Eric Nordstrom has discovered two time capsules in the past two months, each dating back more than 100 years.

Both times he has been left with a feeling of guilt and an internal struggle.

Should he really be the person to find these pieces of time, let alone the one to open them?

"I feel like I don't have the right to open this capsule," Nordstrom said. "I struggled with that with the first one and I struggled with that with this one."

Nordstrom, though, is an urban archeologist and founder of Urban Remains, a West Town firm that recycles and re-sells objects from old buildings. Over the course of the past 10 or so years, he's found a dozen capsules.

The latest box was discovered in a slab of limestone in the wall of what was once St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church in Humboldt Park.

Paul Biasco on what is often found in time capsules.

The remains of the time capsule discovered by Eric Nordstrom in a Humboldt Park church. [All photos by Eric Nordstrom]

Inside the box was the Oct. 26, 1889 Saturday evening issue of the *Chicago Daily News*. The top stories of the day included details of professional safe blowers who "tapped the gopher" of a steel vault at 42nd and Halsted streets, stealing everything from the vault.

"The massive chilled-steel door hung on one hinge like a hoosier farmer's gate. Bits of the combination and steel filings were scattered about thin a radius of ten

feet..." the story read.

Another story focuses on a lawsuit by The Chicago Towing company against the city over \$300 paid for tug boat licenses in the river.

The gray building where the safe was found at 2733 W. Hirsch St. barely resembled a church as of late. St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church was built in 1889 for \$5,000, according to records obtained by Nordstrom.

Most recently it was home to the DIY arts collective Young Camelot, but that's another story.

Nordstrom, 38, was on hand Friday as construction crews tore down the structure. A six-unit building will be built in its place.

He was on the lookout for anything of significance that could be saved, cataloged and either put in his Urban Remains shop at 1850 W. Grand Ave. or in his museum BLDG. at 445 E. Illinois St.

Nordstrom sensed there was a good chance there would be a time capsule in the former church due to his decade of experience at demolition sites and told the wrecking crew to be careful with an arch over the entryway.

There were two limestones flanking the entrance — he knew it was one or the other.



Humboldt Park Time Capsule

The copper box was in a carved out portion of the limestone and contained a Norwegian-language newspaper called the "Skandinaven" with an announcement of the construction of the church circled in blue pencil.

It also included an issue of *The Daily Inter Ocean* from Oct. 26, 1889, a copy of "The Workman," a publication from Pittsburgh, a

copy of *The Morning News* from Oct. 26, 1889, *The Lutheran Observer* and a copy of the *Svenska Tribune*.

There was also a handwritten letter, but it disintegrated after being taken from the



Humboldt Park Time Capsule

box.

"That gets to me the most. They crumble in your hands," Nordstrom said. "There's absolutely no way [to save them], at least thus far with these and others. The survivability is just not there. Whatever message they wanted to convey to whoever was to discover the box is lost. To me that's really disheartening to not have the ability to hear their voice."



Humboldt Park Time Capsule

The other box Nordstrom found was in March at a former church on Adams near the United Center. It contained four bibles in various versions.

Nordstrom said he has gained the trust of wrecking crews over the past 10 years of doing salvage work and is often tipped off to upcoming teardowns that would be of a significance to him.



Humboldt Park Time Capsule

In recent years the Downtown resident has focused much more heavily on documenting the buildings and their history both before and after it's demolished through photos and on his blog, urbanremainschicago.com.

"I always like to say I'm documenting the death of a building," he said.

Nordstrom is saddened that no one connected to any organization or church where he has found a capsule has contacted

him about seeing it.

"I'm just waiting for one phone call or one email that says, 'This is incredibly cool. I'm connected to that narrative. I'm connected to that time capsule,'" Nordstrom



Humboldt Park Time Capsule

said. "Nothing like that has happened."

If it does, Nordstrom says he will gladly give the remains to an individual with a connection.

In the meantime, the remains will be in his museum and documented on his website.

"I live and breathe this and I can always make it accessible to anyone doing research or I may use it in an exhibit down the line if I find there are more capsules," Nordstrom said.

For more neighborhood news, listen to DNAinfo Radio here:

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Humboldt Park Time Capsule



Humboldt Park Time Capsule



Humboldt Park Time Capsule



Humboldt Park Time Capsule

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Toilet rat bites Irish man's bum, prompting city-wide scare

2016-04-20 16:22:13 UTC

mashable.com

By Sam Haysom 11 hours ago

LONDON — That old saying about how you're never further than six feet away from a rat at any time might be truer than you think.

Even our precious, precious toilets are no longer safe.

An unnamed resident of County Cork, Ireland, discovered this the hard way recently after he was bitten on the backside by a rat while using his toilet, the *Evening Echo* reports. If that isn't the stuff of nightmares then frankly we don't know what is.

Mind your bum... after rat bite on loo <https://t.co/7viyOjhfmX>
pic.twitter.com/lgTQIMITEq

— Evening Echo (@CorkEveningEcho) April 19, 2016

The incident was discussed during a meeting at a Cork County Council.

"The flooding resulted in another problem for residents, that of rat infestations, which really upset many families, mentally and physically," Councillor Noel Collins said.

"Indeed, one elderly gentleman suffered a rat bite to his posterior while using his toilet, and had to receive immediate medical attention."

"I would advise homeowners to keep their toilet seats down when not in use, and to watch their posteriors."

Have something to add to this story? Share it in the comments.

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Tokens of Death: Owls, Cats and Phantom Funerals

hauntedohiobooks.com

This is the official website of the 7-volume Haunted Ohio series and the Ghosts of the Past series by Ohio author Chris Woodyard

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Tokens of Death: Owls, Cats, and Phantom Funerals

It is a peculiar characteristic of some of my family members, including myself, that they are able to tell when people are going to die. For example, in the story titled, "The Skull Beneath the Skin" in *Haunted Ohio V: 200 Years of Ghosts*, I told of seeing a skull face on an otherwise healthy-looking man who, I was told later by someone who knew him, was in the final stages of cancer. It is an unsettling and erratic talent to have, but one that would have been well-known to our ancestors, who were fascinated by the harbingers, portents, and tokens of death.

As I said in a recent post on an Indiana Banshee, "tokens of death" were a frequent theme in the ghost stories of the past. These death-omens could be anything from a prophetic dream, a vision of a phantom funeral, headless apparitions or women in white ghosts, a familiar disembodied voice calling one's name, a crown of feathers in a pillow or mattress, dogs howling, or mysterious lights. In *The Face in the Window*, you'll find the story of a cat named "Death," who, like Oscar, the cat who predicts death at a Rhode Island nursing home, spelled doom for patients at the Cincinnati City Hospital and a man who believed he was about to die because he had heard the family Banshee.

Here are a few other harbingers of death from the past.

A Dream That Foretold Death.

A post-mortem examination was made at Franklin yesterday of the body of Lum McDaniel, whose strange and sudden death Saturday has been reported. The physicians in charge found that death resulted from paralysis of the heart. It is said that Mr. McDaniel had a peculiar dream the night before his death, which he related next morning at the breakfast table. He thought he was alone and suddenly fell in a fainting fit, and no one being near to help him he died. The actual facts coincide with the dream. *Sandusky [OH] Daily Register* 15 October 1892: p. 2

The Token of Death

A young man called at a newspaper office in Plymouth, England, the day after the bombardment of Alexandria, and asked if the names of any of the Englishmen killed during the day had been received. He said that during the afternoon the mother and wife of a petty officer named Revington, serving in Alexandria, had what they regarded as a "token of his death." They were sitting together in their

house talking nad working when they heard or thought they heard the voice of the absent son and husband say, "Mother!" three times. Nothing had been heard about Revington at the newspaper office, but the next day the relatives received a telegram from the Admiralty stating that he was shot in the streets of Alexandria while serving on police duty. *Jackson [MI] Citizen Patriot* 21 September 1882: p. 6

Death Angel Visible

In the summer of 1899, after my second term in medical school, I secured a position in the Lakeland Insane asylum at Lakeland, Ky. I was day warden for a couple of months then was changed to night warden on ward No. 56. The ward had 54 patients, most of whom were epileptics. But there was one by the name of Frank who was not only insane, but through paralysis, was so helpless he had to be fed and carried around from place to place. This made him a great care. We had another patient by the name of Ellis, who was so full of devilment that he would often go down along the foot of the beds along the ward and jerk the covers off. Then he was very quarrelsome also.

Frank had taken sick and did a great deal of groaning, which seemed to annoy Ellis more than a little: and we had to watch him to keep from jumping on Frank. I came on the ward at 9 p.m. At that time all patients were supposed to be in bed. The dining room was at one end of the ward, divided from it by a heavy iron netting. I made a trip through the ward about thirty or forty minutes to see if all were in bed, as we had several who had tried to hang themselves. Of course, I was to keep a close watch on the ward at all times. The ward was about eighty feet long and we always kept a sixteen candle power electric light burning at the opposite end from the dining room, where I sat by a table when not busy going over the ward.

On one side of the ward were a couple of rooms with the side end opening into the ward with no partition between.

On this particular night we had Frank lying on the floor in one of these rooms. And as he was going on and groaning considerable, the day warden said to me when I came on duty that night: "You must watch Ellis close, for he has been wanting to get at Frank all day. "

Everything went well and I had made several rounds making them more often. I had just been on a round and stopped a minute before Frank's room and I noticed he was breathing very hard. As I walked back to the table and sat down, just inside the dining room in front of the gate, which was open, I looked at my watch and it was twenty minutes of twelve.

Earlier in the evening I had started a letter and for the time being I turned my attention to it again.

All of a sudden there was a low rustle something like a lady's skirt will make when

walking by, but there was no sound of footsteps. I looked up at once and as Frank's room was near the lower end of the ward close to the light a glance was sufficient to see anyone in that end of the ward. When I glanced up a figure in a night robe was nearly in the middle of the ward and went directly into Frank's room. As the form had come from the direction of Ellis' bed and seemed to be about his size, I concluded, of course, it was him. I ran down there as quick as I could on tiptoe, hoping to get there before Ellis would have time to jump on Frank.

But when I got there you can imagine my surprise when Ellis was not to be seen. In fact, no one was there. And Frank had quit breathing.

I instantly glanced at Ellis' bed and to more of my surprise, he was in bed seemingly sound asleep. I then made an examination of all the beds and found every patient in bed sound asleep.

I have pondered over this many times, and to this day I can't make out how anyone could have gotten in there and out, and in their bed all still without having been caught, as I only had about sixty feet to go and I ran with my eyes in that direction. Then why was I so sure that was someone, and it was not. After I had gone over the ward thoroughly and walked back to the table I looked at my watch again and it was five minutes after twelve. I have to believe my own eyes and believe it was a death angel who came for Frank that night. L.R.E. [From a 1914 ghost story contest held by the *Dayton [OH] Daily News*.

Phantom funerals are a well-known motif in European ghostlore. In my upcoming book, *The Headless Horror*, I tell of a phantom funeral seen in connection with a suicide unhappy with the location of his grave. Here is a strangely technicolored phantom funeral from Georgia.

A DEATH FORETOLD

A gentleman from Georgia relates the following curious story:

Some years ago, when I was a school boy, attending school at Calvary, Ga., I, in company with one of my cousins, witnessed one of the most wonderful of spirit processions.

'Twas on a Friday afternoon, in the spring of the year, and we were on our way from school. We came down the road, laughing and talking together. We were just opposite the grave yard, at the Primitive Baptist church (Piedmont), where we witnessed one of the grandest burials imaginable. Just in front of us, as silent as moonlight, came the burial procession. On, on, it came. First the corpse in a blue wagon drawn by two white mules. Then the mourners in black. Then the rest of the procession in all the colors of the rainbow, moving with silent tread to the grove which surrounds the yard.

Coming to the grave they halted, lifted the coffin from the wagon, lowered it into the grave and filled it. Then re-entering their wagons and buggies, all of them

moved off, passing over graves, trees and everything else in the way. The whole procession then disappeared like a mist. We knew all of the people, and knew whom they buried. When it disappeared we went home in a hurry and told my mother about it. She would not let us tell Uncle J. and his wife, because it was their little girl that we saw buried. She was at the time, to my certain knowledge, well and hearty. Before Saturday night she was a corpse, and she was carried to the grave in exact accordance with the scene we had witnessed. *Logansport [IN] Pharos Tribune* 2 April 1889: p. 3

In many Native American traditions, the owl is a symbol of death and evil.

OWL HOOTED; SISTER DIED

Ghostly Bird Was True Death Harbinger for Woman in Minnesota

Orwell, Vt., Jan 8. Whenever Henry Sherman, a farmer of this place, hears a barn owl hoot he is just as sure that a near relative has died as though he had received a letter containing the news. Mr. Sherman is not a spiritualist nor a believer in signs, yet he has absolute faith in the owl. Seemingly he has good reason.

Two years ago the farmer was awakened in the night by a loud hooting and was rather surprised, as, while sawwhet owls are not at all uncommon hereabout, the barn variety of bird is rare and in late years they have not been heard. Being curious to get a look at the nocturnal disturber he arose and peered out of the window. There, sitting on a stub close to an apple tree, was the owl hooting at intervals.

Next day Mr. Sherman received a telegram from St. Paul, Minn. Announcing that his sister had died the night before at 12 o'clock. It was 12:15 when he was awakened by the owl. The two incidents were not connected until three months later, when the bird again appeared on the night that Mr. Sherman's uncle, John H. Dodge, of Water Mill, L.I. passed away. When it was found that his death had taken place at the very hour the owl set up his cries the farmer began to feel queer.

Last March a cousin in Scranton, Pa., was killed by a trolley car at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. About 4:30 the owl showed up, blindly flapping about over the house and emitting long and discordant cries. This was almost too much for Mr. Sherman and he shot at the bird. He missed and away went the owl.

The feathered messenger of death did not appear again until last week, when for an hour one night he sat silently on his old perch. That day Mr. Sherman had received word that Mr. Dodge's son was seriously ill of pneumonia, and he feared the worst. At 6 o'clock in the morning the owl hooted and the farmer was certain that his nephew was dead. In fact, he had died at that hour. *Oakland [OH] Tribune* 8 January 1907: p. 3

I hope this post finds all of you well. And, no, if I see a skull instead of a face when I meet you in the street, I will not tell you. Some things are best left unsaid.

For more stories of tokens of death, see *The Face in the Window*, *The Victorian Book of the Dead*, and *The Ghost Wore Black: Ghastly Tales from the Past*. (All are available for Kindle as well. Or ask your library or bookstore to order it for you.)

Posted by

Chris Woodyard

on November 27, 2012 in Animal Tales, Death, Folklore, Fortean Mysteries, Ghosts, Mourning Customs and History, News, Strange Deaths, Victorian and tagged death angel, death omens, owls, phantom funeral, portents of death, skull, tokens of death, visions

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Topless activist claims cop assault ruined her circus career

VICTORIA BEKIEMPIS

nydailynews.com

EXCLUSIVE: Topless activist sues NYPD, claims injuries from cop assault ruined her circus career

BY Victoria Bekiempis
NEW YORK DAILY NEWS
Monday, May 9, 2016, 4:00 AM



Egan-Chin,Debbie,, New York Dail

Phoenix Feeley advocates that women should have the right to go topless in public. She's suing the NYPD over injuries she claimed she suffered during a 2014 encounter with police.

A topless rights activist claims her circus career has suffered after she was body-checked by a cop during a parking dispute, the Daily News has learned.

Phoenix Feeley, 36, alleges in a lawsuit that she suffered cop-inflicted injuries on July 24, 2014.

Feeley and “a number of other people on East 12th Street, between Avenues A and B, were waiting for street cleaning to end, so they could park their cars on the other side of the street,” according to her Manhattan Federal Court suit.

As Feeley, aka Jill Coccaro, waited around noon that day, a man on the block assaulted her with hot coffee, she said.

SET FREE! TOPLESS ADVOCATE RELEASED FROM NEW JERSEY JAIL

Feeley — who notoriously called 16-days in a New Jersey jail for topless sunbathing a “death sentence” — alerted cops.

One officer, who was “full of hostility” threatened to give Feeley and those speaking up for her parking tickets.

The officer started writing Feeley a ticket as she stood near her car and then asked her to move.

When the flame-eating Feeley asked why she needed to move, the officer “violently and intentionally barreled into Plaintiff, causing her pain and injury,” her lawsuit claims.



Todd Maisel/New York Daily News

A parking dispute set off Feeley's encounter with cops, according to her lawsuit.

"She is a circus performer so it has been affecting her work. She does trapeze and other circus activities," medical records cited in an amended complaint state.

While Feeley is receiving acupuncture treatment, the alleged injuries she suffered "continue to cause her pain and limit her professional and personal

activities to this day."

OVER 300 TOPLESS PROTESTERS MARCH IN NYC AGAINST DE BLASIO'S EFFORT TO RID TIMES SQUARE OF NEARLY NUDE WOMEN

"The officer involved ... acted like a bully and a thug, and he used unnecessary force on a woman much smaller than him," said Jeffrey Rothman, Feeley's lawyer. "He, like so many other of his male colleagues in the police force, needs to learn how to keep their hands to themselves and to control their anger."

Feeley, who advocates that women should have the right to go topless in public, has alleged police misconduct in other lawsuits against New York City.

She won a \$29,000 settlement from the city in 2007, following her allegations she was falsely arrested for walking topless on Delancey St. in 2005. Women can legally go topless in public in New York State.

Feeley also claimed in 2012 court papers that cops wrongly arrested her for putting a "Got Vermont?" sticker on her co-op's front gate. She received a \$35,000 settlement from the city.

Asked about the new suit, a spokesman for the city Law Department said: "We will review the complaint."

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Tourist dies on search for Pope Lick monster

Beth Warren , @BethWarrenCJ

courier-journal.com



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Two young Ohio tourists, searching for the Pope Lick Trestle monster while in Louisville, saw a train barreling their way with no time to run.

Safety was about 40 feet away, but Roquel Bain, 26, and her boyfriend didn't have time to make it off the train trestle Saturday night. He dangled off the edge until the train could pass, but she didn't make it.

A Norfolk Southern train fatally struck Bain, who was then knocked more than 80 feet to the ground below.

Jeffersontown fire officials rescued the boyfriend, whose name has not been released, after he climbed back on top of the trestle, near the 3100 block of South Pope Lick Road close to Taylorsville Road, officials said.

Bain was pronounced dead at the scene at 7:39 p.m.

"It's just so sad - a very pretty young girl who had her life in front of her," deputy coroner Jack Arnold said. "It's just so preventable."

In her purse, investigators found a work badge that indicated she had worked as a surgical assistant.

There were no signs the couple had been drinking or abusing drugs, but toxicology tests on the victim are pending, he said.

Homicide detectives with the Louisville Metro Police Department are investigating, but on Sunday spokeswoman Alicia Smiley said, "There's nothing to indicate foul play."

The train engineer told officials his speed was 32 mph when he saw the couple, sounded the horn and tried to brake, Arnold said. Investigators will review the train's video footage, he said.

The boyfriend told officials he and Bain came to town from Dayton for a paranormal tour scheduled from 10 p.m. to midnight Saturday.

Brandon Barnes, a security guard at Waverly Hills Sanatorium, said Bain had purchased two tickets online for \$25 each for Saturday night's guided tour, which was attended by 45 ghost

hunters.

Bain and her boyfriend decided to spend time beforehand hunting for the Pope Lick monster, the subject of an urban legend and popularized on videos on Youtube and other social media sites and in a movie.

The deputy coroner said he personally has investigated a handful of fatal train incidents that ranged from a homeless person falling asleep on the tracks, to a thrill seeker misjudging the time they had to get off the tracks to someone committing suicide. He said this is the first victim confirmed searching for the monster.

During his investigation, Arnold said he has learned that the area is popular with teens and young adults - especially on New Year's.

One Instagram photo from 2014, which got 188 likes, shows an Eastern High School graduate and a friend with their legs dangling off the trestle and proclaiming, "The Pope Lick Monster didn't get us, but a train almost did!"

Beth Warren can be reached at 502-582-7164 or bwarren@courier-journal.com.

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Spanish town entertained by escaped hippopotamus

May 5, 2016

yahoo.com

MADRID (AP) — Officials say a hippopotamus that escaped from a visiting circus caused some traffic chaos and not a little diversion when he strolled easily along a street in the southwestern town of Palos de la Frontera.

A town spokesman said the animal escaped late Wednesday while being transferred from one pen to another, and then wandered out onto a town road.

Videos posted on Twitter show the hippopotamus in the middle of the street, blocking traffic as people tried to attract its attention.

The spokesman said Thursday that town residents enjoyed the incident as they saw the animal posed no danger.

He said the incident lasted some 15 minutes before circus workers coaxed it back to a pen.

The official spoke on condition of anonymity in keeping with town hall regulations.

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The Fremont Troll - a massive sculpture hidden beneath the Aurora Bridge and clutching an actual Volkswagen Beetle

thevintagenews.com



- Featured
- News

The Vintage News

May 18, 2016

The Fremont Troll (also known as The Troll, or the Troll Under the Bridge) is a public sculpture in the Fremont neighborhood of Seattle, Washington in the United States, under the Aurora bridge that carries state route 99, in the neighborhood of Fremont. It was originally constructed in 1990 over a period of seven weeks by four local artists named Steve Badanes, Will Martin, Donna Walter, and Ross Whitehead, and was sponsored by the Fremont Arts Council as part of a competition for a new art project.



Built in 1990, the troll attracts thousands of tourist annually. Source: Megan/Flickr

Many members of the community were invited to help build the sculpture. This massive sculpture is 5.5 m (18 ft) high, weighs 6,000 kg (13,000 lb), and is made of steel rebar, wire, and concrete. A long beard and shaggy hair hangs down to the ground past his sad mouth and single, shining eye. In his left hand, he crushes an old style Volkswagen Beetle, which originally contained a time capsule of Elvis memorabilia; it was removed after the car was vandalized and the California license plate was stolen.



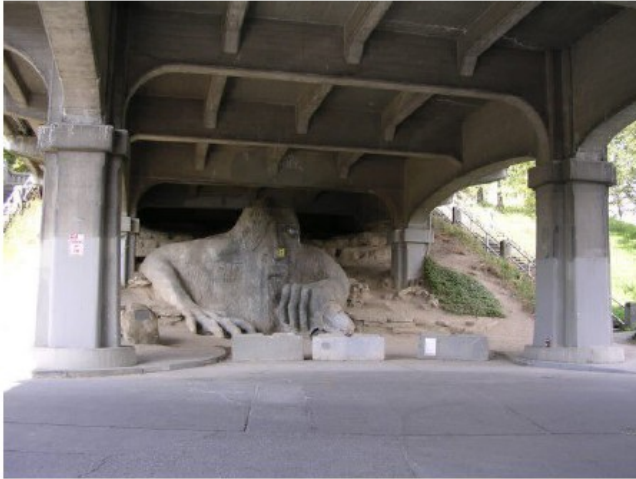
It is 5.5 m (18 ft) high, weighs 6,000 kg (13,000 lb), and is made of steel rebar, wire, and concrete. Source: Kleran Lynam/Flickr

In 2005, in honor of the sculpture, the segment of Aurora Avenue North under the bridge, running downhill from the Troll to North 34th Street was renamed "Troll Avenue". The sculpture is a popular spot for photographs with many visitors posing beneath his giant hands.

The community pays tribute to the troll every October 31st with a mobile "Troll-o-ween" party, some kind of a birthday party for the Fremont Troll, starting under the bridge. Trolloween's performances have included variety/comedy shows, dramas of trolls, musicals about trolls, Greek myths, Dr. Faust,

Dante's Inferno, Scottish folktales, and Don Juan.

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Many members of the community were invited to help build the sculpture. Source: Ell Duke/Flickr



The Troll clutches a real Volkswagen Beetle in his right hand. Source: Scott Beale/Flickr



The crushed car and out-of-state plate were meant as protests against outsiders development. Source: Angela n./Flickr



The Volkswagen Beetle originally contained a time capsule of Elvis memorabilia. Source: Kim F/Flickr



In 2005, Aurora Avenue North spanning the underside of the bridge was renamed Troll Avenue. Source: Scott Beale/Flickr

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The tragic truth about Bubblegum Boy – a Hull urban legend

May 19th 2016

hulldailymail.co.uk

By Hull Daily Mail | Posted: August 29, 2015



GRAVE: The memorial to Alfie Middleton in Hedon Road Cemetery.



The story of 'Bubblegum Boy' has been bandied around school playgrounds in Hull since the 1960s. **Faye Preston** chats to historian **Mike Covell** about the reality behind the urban legend.

SPEEDING through the alleyway, children on Chopper bikes can be heard yelling, "Watch out! The Bubblegum Boy!"

They skid to a halt, scattering dust and pebbles over Alfie Middleton's grave in Hedon Road Cemetery.

"My mum says he swallowed bubble gum and it wrapped around his heart," says one youngster.

"Well my mum says he hanged himself," replies his friend.

While this may be a fictional scene, it is one many people who grew up sharing the tale of the Bubblegum Boy in the 1960s may be able to relate to.

The urban legend of the little boy from Hull who died after choking on a piece of chewing gum was used as a cautionary tale by parents across the city.

Now, the true story of the 12-year-old, who died in 1933, has been uncovered – and far from the grim tale that has been bandied around school playgrounds for decades, it tells a tale of a mother's heartache at losing her son.

The search to get to the truth started when Mike Covell, who runs Amazing Hull Tours, browsed the Facebook group Hull The Good Old Days.

There, people had posted about a little boy whose grave, a stone representation of him wearing his school cap, with his left hand leaning on a pillar, was inscribed with a rhyme about the perils of chewing bubble gum.

It apparently read: "Chewing gum is nasty, chewing gum is dirty, chewing gum wrapped round my heart and brought me to my grave."

But when another person posted he had actually died in a crash, Mr Covell knew all was not as it seemed.

"The first crack in the story appeared when one poster stated that the boy had not died from eating and swallowing bubblegum, but had died in a tragic road accident," he said. "Another story had it that the ghost of the boy stalked the nearby Seven Alleys."

Others claimed Alfie had drowned while another said he hanged himself from a nearby tree and still haunts the cemetery to this day.

Intrigued, Mr Covell started his search for the truth of Bubblegum Boy, beginning at Alfie's now broken and neglected grave.

Kneeling down, he dusted away moss and pushed aside overgrown grass, uncovering three separate inscriptions on the faces of the grave.

Although hard to make out, the words were the first insight into the pain little Alfie's family had gone through.

They read: "Treasured memories of our dear boy Alfred Middleton. Passed away July 30th 1933 aged 12 years. Watching and waiting Mamma's bairn."

For Mr Covell, it was a reminder that behind the myth of Bubblegum Boy lay the pain of grieving parents.

"There was no mention of bubble gum, chewing gum, or any other cause of death and there was certainly no rhyme or verse," he said.

Another inscription read: "Also Wilson Middleton, brother of Alfie, died February 2, 1940. Safe in the arms of Jesus."

Alfie's parents had suffered the death of another child just seven years later.

On the other side of the stone were the words: "Also Lynette, dearly beloved wife of Thomas Middleton and mother of the above. Departed this life April 21, 1952, aged 67 years."

But what had caused Alfie's early death? A search through records at Hull History Centre suggests parents throughout the decades had used the tragedy as a cautionary tale to keep their children out of trouble. Each one coming up with their own story, reflecting their own fears.

"Don't swallow chewing gum, or it might wrap round your heart and kill you like the little boy," they would warn.

"Don't go into Seven Alleys or you might end up hanged like the little boy," was another.

"Don't play near the road or you might end up getting run over and killed like the little boy."

You can almost hear worried parents yelling it over the wall as a rabble of kids speed off down a tenfoot.

A flick through the microfilms at the history centre was all it took to find out details of Alfie's tragic ending.

The young boy, of George Street, city centre, actually died from meningitis. A far cry from the legend that, like his stone statue, has immortalised him for decades.

In his death announcement in the Mail, published on August 1, 1933, his parents write: "We miss you when the morn dawns, we miss you when the night returns, we miss you here, we miss you there, Alfie we miss you everywhere. Too sweet a bud to ever bloom. From dad and mam, and brothers, and sisters."

The mystery of Bubblegum Boy was solved in an afternoon. For Mr Covell, his discovery was a poignant reminder that, behind all legends, is often a painful truth.

"A local legend that has been passed around in Hull since the 1930s and reaching the height of its power in the 1960s, destroyed, debunked and thoroughly researched in the space of a couple of hours," says Mr Covell.

"It appears the many variations of the cause of death arise from cautionary tales. In all examples it appeared the people who were youngsters in the 1960s were told of the cause of death by their parents. Parents had told children different things according to the fears they had at the time."

While the real story of Alfie Middleton may not be as intriguing as Bubblegum Boy, the mystery surrounding his death has ensured his place in the childhoods of many – a childhood he missed out on.

But Mr Covell says, now we know the truth about his death, it may finally be time to remember the boy and not the bubblegum.

6 comments

- feedtt | August 30 2015, 11:11AM

What the hell am I reading

- alf_johnson | August 29 2015, 10:46PM

Oh yer n..... ditch. Used to catch newts there. Go down 7 Lanes passed the drain on

there it was.

• alf_johnson | August 29 2015, 10:43PM

Dear oh dear. Bubblegum boy was well known in the Hedon Road area. See crowlestreetkids.com I remember the stories. When I used to go down 7 Lanes as a boy and run errands for the low catagory prisoners from 7 Lanes. They would pass us money through the mesh and we would get them things from Hedon Road shops for a small amount of pennies. Bubblegum boy was told to us and I for one never swallowed bubblegum.

• Alex_Dock | August 29 2015, 10:32PM

Urban legend my R..se

• openyoureyes | August 29 2015, 4:11PM

The Urban Legend that nobody has heard of. What a waste of time this story is however it does show how easy it is to manipulate history.

• Quahog | August 29 2015, 10:44AM

I grew up in that area in the late 50's throughout the 60's and and early 70's, I played in 7 Alley's and even had a den in the graveyard. I never heard of this urban legend. I often wonder how the nearby ditch with a derogatory/racist name was so called though.



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Truth Behind The Viral Story Of Mysterious Skeletons In London Basement

demilked.com

Published 2 days ago

The internet was taken by storm with the viral story of mysterious skeletons found in a basement under one of the London orphanages.

But internauts are not easily fooled, and commenters uncovered the truth soon enough, bringing the fantasy seekers back to reality.

The *Merrylin Cryptid* collection is actually a fictional invention of Alex CF, a London-based illustrator, writer, and sculptor with a fantastically warped imagination and a talent for the obscure. And now you can add 'marketing specialist' to the list, as this 'true facts' approach worked wonderfully promoting his *Merrylin Cryptid Museum*.

Sure, finding out the truth ruins the illusion a bit, but it doesn't stop his creepy creations from being awesome. See for yourself in the pictures below.

More info: alex cf

In 2006, a sealed basement was uncovered beneath a London orphanage



Inside lay thousands of bizarre artifacts

Vampire anatomical research cases

Otherworldly winged skeletons

The collection was a lifelong work of Thomas Theodore Merrylin, a Crypto-naturalist, Fringe Zoologist and Xeno-Archeologist

Introduction to the museum:

Andrius

mysterious-skulls-skeletons-thomas-theodore-merrylin-home-london-10

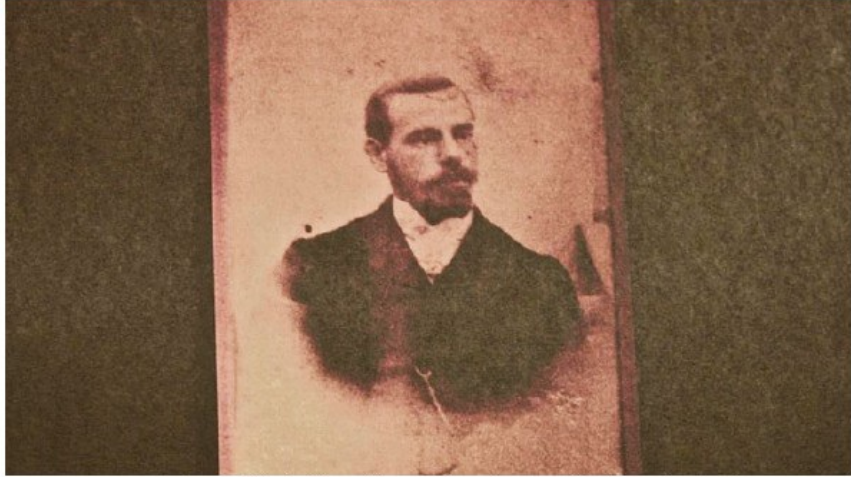


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<https://www.instagram.com/anndrius/>



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mysterious-skulls-skeletons-thomas-theodore-merrylin-home-london-5



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TSA Lines Causing Frowns? Send in the Clowns! (and Tiny Horses)

nbcnews.com

May 16 2016, 3:55 pm ET

TSA Lines Causing Frowns? Send in the Clowns! (and Tiny Horses)

by Harriet Baskas



Fern Street Circus performers entertain travelers at the San Diego International Airport. San Diego International Airport

With mounting delays around the country being blamed on Transportation Security Administration cutbacks and increased passenger traffic, airports are turning to musical performers and free sweets to keep travelers' tempers in

check.

And some airports are getting a little more creative.

Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport is now inviting miniature therapy horses and their handlers from the non-profit Seven Oaks Farms Miniature Therapy Horses program in Hamilton, Ohio to visit the terminals several times a month.

"Animals help reduce stress and anxiety levels and put smiles on people's faces," said Mindy Kershner, a spokeswoman for the airport.

"Unlike service animals, who are working and should not be touched, therapy animals can be patted and hugged."

And while many other airports have therapy dog programs in the terminals, "We figured this is Kentucky, after all, so we need horses," Kershner said.



TSA Promises Reforms, but Warns Travelers of Summer Waits

San Diego International Airport is bringing in the clowns.

As part of a performing arts residency program, Fern Street Circus will be offering performances, rehearsals and workshops in the airport over the next eight months.

"They are creating content

inspired by the traveler

experience, so they will constantly be visible, trying out new ideas and interacting with passengers," said airport spokesman Jonathan Heller. "We certainly think they will be at the checkpoints often, as people waiting in line are a great audience for them!"

Sea-Tac Airport is expanding its popular post-security music program to the pre-security areas, and dipping into it coffers to hire extra staff workers to help TSA with some checkpoint duties, such as bin loading and unloading.

The airport in Atlanta is adding extra music performers in the areas before security, and bringing on more staff members to answer travelers' questions.

During very busy checkpoint wait times, the team will also be handing out snacks and beverages to passengers in line.

"Passengers in the world's most traveled airport should not be surprised if they find themselves welcomed, offered a bottled water and provided information by ATL's general manager," said airport spokesman Andy Gobeil.

At Denver International Airport, the customer service team now occasionally hands out water, Hershey's Kisses, Peppermint Patties and lollipops to passengers waiting on long lines.

"We can't participate in security-related procedures," said DIA spokesman Heath Montgomery, "but we are talking with the TSA about how we can creatively use airport staff for things like bin management and other non-security tasks."



O'Hare Airport: Airline provides cots for travelers stuck on long TSA lines

For its part, the Transportation Security Administration says it working with airlines and airports on strategies for cutting down the long wait times at airports. Solutions include moving canine teams to the busiest hub airports, increasing budgets for staffing and overtime and, according to the Atlanta-Journal Constitution, working with Delta Air Lines to

test fast-loading, radio frequency identification bins at two checkpoint lanes at the airport in Atlanta.

Two senators are urging airlines to help reduce checkpoint lines by dropping checked bag fees for the summer.

"Without charges for checking their bags, passengers will be far less likely to carry them on, which snarls screening checkpoints and slows the inspection process," U.S. Senators Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.) and Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.) said in a letter to executives at 12 major U.S. airlines.

Airlines are warning passengers to show up extra early for their flights.

Travel Tip: Arrive early! @TSA security checkpoints are experiencing longer wait times through September. #Travel pic.twitter.com/y4CRZnu4lr

— Alaska Airlines (@AlaskaAir) April 18, 2016

And while urging travelers to join the TSA PreCheck program, which offers expedited checkpoint access, the airline trade group Airlines for America (A4A) is encouraging fliers to be vocal on social media about their long checkpoint wait time complaints.

The groups "IHateTheWait" asks travelers to use Twitter and Instagram — and the #IHateTheWait hashtag — to share photos and comments about how unhappy they are with their experience on long TSA lines.

TSA line so long at Chicago O'Hare that it took up the rest of the terminal and had to wrap around. #ihatethewait pic.twitter.com/JKWptzy0a7

— Iheanyi Ekechukwu (@kwuchu) May 16, 2016

Actual chaos wall to wall in #OHareAirport. About to miss my @AmericanAir flight. @AskTSA #IHateTheWait pic.twitter.com/YY00er1W5K

— Ariel Sara (@TheArielSara) May 16, 2016

Many other airports are doing their part too.

Many are putting "arrive earlier than ever" notes on their websites and sending tweets when waits are unusually long.

Others, including Seattle-Tacoma International and Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International airports and, most recently, the Port Authority of New York & Jersey (operator of JFK, LaGuardia and Newark Liberty International airports), issued statements or sent TSA letters saying they're exploring using private contractors instead of TSA staff for checkpoint duties.

First Published May 16 2016, 3:24 pm ET

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Milton Mysteries: The Tunnel Underneath Main Street

wordpress.com

Posted on November 4, 2015 By Chad Abramovich



Logo



This old postcard may be one of my favorite finds from the Milton archives. Published by Raymond A. Coburn, who owned the pictured general store in Milton from 1908 until the flood of 1927. This image of "downtown Milton" depicted a cartoonish almost satirical image of what town had the possibility to be like in the future. That vision included blimp taxi service to South Hero, which I still think

would be sort of cool. Today's Milton of the future has a CCTA bus line. | photo: Milton Historical Society.

My thoughts on Vermont weirdness often drift back to Milton, my former hometown. I suppose this is where I would further enhance that sentence with an explanation, but to be honest, I'm having trouble coming up with an angle on this. It's where I grew up, and something about spending a third of my life there has just tattooed it into my framework. It's where my love of the weird and the offbeat began from inside a quiet suburban bedroom, and began to proliferate outwards – which would become one of my most distinguished aspects of my personality, and why this blog now exists.



I often tout the Milton Creamery as the first abandoned building I've ever explored and became fond of, but more accurately, the first forsaken place I would ever lay eyes on was this ramshackle barn on the North Road I used to pass when I'd ride the school bus home. As a kid, I awarded it the moniker, "the broken barn", which wasn't all that creative but oh well, at least it was memorable. My mom was even cool enough to drive a little 6 year old me there a few times so I could explore it. Today, the faded relic is barely recognizable as the forest has almost consumed it. This was taken circa 1994, and is a scanned photograph.

As I grew older, I let my burning curiosity get the best of me, and began writing down all the urban legends and stories from my childhood, and all the accounts told to me over the years. This was a ritual I began to love, because I was quickly finding out that Milton was a fascinatingly storied town!

It's geographical area is unassumingly large, ranking 10th largest in land area and 8th in population (10,352 bodies at the 2010 census). All of that space is a perfect for hemming in obscure things and historical oddities. In the 1920s, aviation enthusiast and innovative inventor Paul Schill built an airport in town, where Sears and Ace Hardware are today (which accounts for the pancake flat plot of land along Route 7). But his goal of putting Milton on the map as an aviation manufacturer hot spot died in the beginnings of the great depression after he declared bankruptcy. In the later half of the 20th century, we were one of the premier racing towns in the northeast, with the Catamount Stadium (something I'd love to write about in great detail) and a drag strip drawing enthusiasts from around the region. These things have also become faded ghosts with the changing of the times.

Over the years, Milton would be a place where I would begin to shake hands with a lot of ghosts. Some were metaphorical; conjured from inflicting wounds laid upon to me. I began learning a lot about my Aspergers diagnosis in this town and still remember my lonesome youth rolling and stumbling, figuring out how I processed information in different ways from the rest, and how I often felt powerless because I didn't feel like I understood the world around me, learning the rules out with the wolves.

But some of these ghosts were *real*. A former friend once told me about how their Bert's Mobile Home trailer was haunted by the ghost of a little girl, who particularly liked a long narrow hallway connecting the bedrooms behind the living room. Though I've spent quite a bit of time there in my past life, I never had a run in with her. But I do recall the

This was awesome, especially enjoyed hearing about what your mom did for you when you were younger. My little also has Aspergers and I do everything I can to inspire her unusual mind. Thank you!

■ Chad Abramovich
November 9, 2015

Thanks for this nice comment Emily! Really glad you enjoyed. It's the little things that parents do that really make large differences. I know I've learned that as I crossed into adulthood.

8. Duane Letourneau
November 9, 2015

Well done. Contact me regarding your computer needs.

■ Chad Abramovich
November 9, 2015

Thanks for commenting Duane. What is your preferred method of contact?

9. starlife
November 10, 2015

Loved reading about Milton history! My Memere and Pepere owned the store, garage and cabins across from the new high school (now a modern gas plaza) and I spent many a memorable time in that area! Also my uncle Ronnie worked the pit at Catamount and I loved going to the races! Thank you!

10. Joe Emery (@MrEmeryFairfax)
December 9, 2015

Hi Chad,

I have really enjoyed reading all your blog entries. I am a teacher at BFA-Fairfax and would love to incorporate some of what you do into my AP US History class. I am curious as to what resources you use to help conduct research. I have looked through the Landscape Change from UVM and they are great!

Any Franklin County posts upcoming?

Thanks, ATB,

Joe Emery jemery@fwsu.org

■ Chad Abramovich
January 26, 2016

Hi Joel

Sorry for my late reply. Sadly these things tend to get lost in the shuffle sometimes. I appreciate the kind words! I'm pretty happy I discovered the UVM Landscape Change Program. I've spent countless hours browsing their archives, so much that my neck starts to ache haha. The Milton post was probably my favorite that I've written to be honest. Those stories and memories mean a great deal to me, and have really influenced who I've become. That being said, I do have a few Franklin County posts in the works, I'm just doing the research, and then I have to wait until we loose some of this snow so I can get to where I need to go! But if you know of any cool, weird and unreported stories from the area, I would love to hear from you!

Obscure Vermont

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hallway always being dark and creepy, even during the day, which is a good breeding ground for spook stories. When I asked the family about the girl, it became more complex and amorphous like these stories always tend to do; there were no records of any young girls growing up or dying there, making this story a weird mystery. But, they somehow *knew* she was there.

There is said to be a house on Main Street where things literally go bump in the night, perhaps because it used to be a funeral parlor in the last century. Weird lights and objects in the sky have been reported around 900 foot Cobble Hill for a few decades, and local lore tells of a haunted island in man made Lake Arrowhead where a young woman was murdered by her jealous stricken husband in the late 30s, when he became enraged after the men of town kept admiring her. And, I'll always remember this arbitrary point of non-trivia about Hobbs Road. Though the paved thoroughfare was named after a farming family, my friend once joked to me as he was reading the directions I wrote down so he could find my house; "I noticed that your neighborhood was off Hobbs Road... did you know that Hobbs is an old name for the devil?"

The more curious I became, the more I began to take comfort in the quiet company of weirdness and lore. Some mysteries I would have the pleasure of investigating, others still remain lost somewhere in the haze. Either way, both sets of ghosts would successfully haunt me for years to come.

Underneath The Ground

One of the most impressionable stories from my childhood told of a clandestine tunnel that started in the basement of the Joseph Clark mansion, and ran underneath several old homes on Milton's Main Street.

The stately Joseph Clark mansion, perched on a slight rise above Route 7, used to be the town offices and library back in the 1990s, which was the time when I picked up on the story. According to some, one of the house's long dead builders is still there, and may be responsible for the next part of the story.

Kids in the library used to do what kids do best, and venture into places they weren't supposed to. One of those places was the tunnel. But some would come running back up the stairs, visibly shaken, and tell the librarian that they were chased away by a man in the tunnel they thought was a security guard, whose presence was announced by the sound of heavy footsteps approaching them and then a glimpse of his tall dark form. But, the librarians would be confused and explain that the library had no security guard.

Unfortunately, that was where the story went cold. Was there really a tunnel underneath Main Street, connecting many of the town's oldest homes together? If so, what was it used for? Popular theories guesstimate that it was constructed for use in the underground railroad.

Lorinda Henry of the Milton Historical Society was kind enough to sit down with me and help me in my search for answers. Meeting in the Milton Museum, which is pretty much the town attic that sits in an old church, we dug through countless unlabeled binders and boxes, but sadly, any information containing the tunnel wasn't in their archives, or had long been lost. But the builder of the Clark mansion however was well documented.



The Joseph Clark Mansion

After Milton's official chartering in 1763, settlement was lackluster for the next 30 years. West Milton on the lower Lamoille banks, became the first part of town to be developed. A few miles up the river was a part of town that was known as Milton Falls, which would be the area around present day Main Street. In 1789, Elisha Ashley would survey the first east-west road in the Milton Falls section of town, by running a straight line from the Westford/East Road intersection, to a stump on the Lamoille River. Noah Smith, one of Vermont's first lawyers, owned most of the land around what would become Main Street and Milton Village.

Joseph Clark was one of the earliest settlers in town, and his business endeavors made him both one of the wealthiest and most influential residents in Milton. He came to Milton in 1816, a

year known by Vermonters as eighteen hundred and froze to death, because of the unseasonably frequent snow and frosts that caused widespread crop failure across the northeast. It's no surprise that some superstitious Vermonters saw this as the coming of the end of the world.

But while the crops were failing, Clark and his partner Joseph Boardman saw opportunity in the rich pine forests that covered most of Milton, and hired crews to harvest the fine timber. The logs were floated up Lake Champlain to Montreal, before they were shipped to England, many to become used by the Royal navy. By 1823, he would purchase a sawmill in West Milton to process the raw timber. But by 1830, woodlands were replaced by agricultural land, and Clark decided to invest in other opportunities. He would build a gristmill in Milton Falls, then move into the brick mansion on Main Street that now bears his name. Later, he would build himself a two story brick office building where Main Street meets River Street, today's Route 7. Clark's move and investment in Milton Falls would lure more people and business endeavors there, and make that the new hub of town.



Joseph Clark's Gristmill, where present day Ice House Road runs over.

Here, the Lamoille River and gravity worked together to form about 5 waterfalls in a few miles of one another constricted in a rocky gorge, before relaxing at West Milton. These falls were ogled and soon sought after for industry. Some however also envisioned bravado and a way to kill boredom. In the 1800s, a growing number of young people in the northeast were jumping in barrels and going over any waterfalls they could find, which would achieve both getting mentioned in the newspaper and sometimes death. I once heard many years ago that around that time, a local boy and self described dare-devil went over Clark's Falls in a barrel. But to my huge disappointment, I couldn't find any verification or information on this man or his leap over the falls. I liked that anecdote enough to include it in this entry though.

Railroads were rapidly spreading their steel arteries across the United States, bringing people, opportunity and growth with them, and because these things were vital for business exploits, this caught Clark's attention. Partnering with John Smith of the Central Vermont Railroad, they worked to get some tracks built through Milton. In 1845, Milton had a rail line and accompanying train station, and that benefited the town greatly. After the civil war, the railroad brought vitality to the town's burgeoning summer tourism industry and industrial mainstays like the former Creamery, a building which has shaped my love of exploring and photography.

Clark would continue to remain active in town affairs until his death in 1879. The house was passed down to family members until 1916, when Joseph's granddaughter, Kate, deeded the house to the town of Milton to use as the town offices, and remained so until 1994 when it was reverted back to a private residence.

Lorinda speculated that the former gristmill behind his mansion could have warranted the construction of a tunnel, which would have sat where present day Ice House Road is. The house was built on a slight ledge, which would have made the tunnel a more convenient way to travel from one place to another, especially in the grueling Vermont winters. But there was no way to know for sure.

The mill and most of the development near the river were washed away during the flood of 1927, making investigations almost impossible.

It was later told to me that someone knew of a "thick iron door" found in the basement of Joseph Clark's former office building on the corner of Route 7 and Main. This was one of the few buildings on River Street to survive the flood of 1927, so that claim seemed pretty credible to me. (But if it were built at a later date, I would be really curious about that mystery as well)

Geography would aid me here. The building was built into a ledge that forms the beginning of Main Street hill. Right above sits the Clark mansion. This means that a door in the basement wall would have lead to some sort of subterranean chamber, which may have been a tunnel.

The historical society told me of a former resident and her mother who once lived there, and claimed to have seen the iron door themselves. The facts seemed to be finally adding up here, but it seems my request for information was a few years too late. The building has since been sold, and it's current owner denies the existence of a door firmly and doesn't want to talk about such things. I attempted to reach out to the previous owners who brought forth the iron door sighting, but they had told the historical society so long ago, that their contact information had since vanished.

Another suggestion illustrated that the tunnel once ran all the way up the hill to the abandoned creamery on Railroad



Joseph Clark's Office Building on the corner of River St (Route 7) and Main. Milton denizens today may recall it by its former reincarnation, as Irish Annie's Pub.



The Irish Annie's building (now vacant) — where the supposed iron door is said to be. Main Street is to the right, which runs up the hill. The Clark Mansion sits behind it. Photo: Google.

Street. And sure enough, there is a walled up door in the basement that once did lead to a tunnel. Could this be the proof I was looking for? I did a little digging around (literally), and talked to a former employee. As it turns out, the door *did* lead to a tunnel, but it wasn't *the* tunnel. It ran significantly shorter, just over to the brick building next door which was also owned by the creamery at the time (now converted

to a private residence). But that tunnel also had its notoriety. Former creamery employees and older Miltonians wistfully admitted that they used to sneak down and party in that tunnel, those shindigs usually included spirits and cigarettes, while the creamery was in operation and even in the years after its closing.



The Creamery Tunnel, sealed off at its other end.

The tunnel story seemed to be disappointingly falling apart. Though it was cool to think about — practically, it didn't make sense. If we stick to the theory of a tunnel running all the way underneath Main Street, why would such a long tunnel need to be constructed? What was its purpose? To further deteriorate the story, the stately homes on Main Street were all built around different times, meaning their construction most likely didn't accommodate the existence of a tunnel. And to prove this, I had spoken with a few Main Street residents who had never even heard the story of the tunnel, but all assured me the only way into their homes were through the front or back doors.

Vicious Waters and Dislocation

It wasn't until some time later, after this project had been pushed to the back of my to-do list that something came up which immediately pulled it from memory. A Facebook commenter who knew that I was attempting to get to the bottom of this sent me a message and shared a personal account with me. As a kid in 1960s Milton, he used to play with his buddies down near the river, and he recalled seeing a cave like opening set back in the cliffs near the dam. Popular labeling at the time dubbed it as a tunnel. He even remembers his parents admonishing him and telling him not to go near it because it was likely to be dangerous. He never did, but speculated that it may be what I'm looking for. He also said that some of his friends claimed to get inside, but couldn't recall any more than that. For all we knew, they may have been embellishing the truth.

One gloomy summer afternoon in August, I set out with a few friends to dig around the Lamoille banks, trying to find the telltale opening. That part of town has long been awarded an odd moniker by local youth who call it *The Vector*, which is a robust sounding name, but I can't seem to relate its actual definition to the rocky gorge spanning from the Route 7 bridge to the bottom of twisting Ritchie Avenue. But the name has proven very successful at sticking into the flypaper of local culture. I grew up knowing that area as *The Vector*, and still do.

While doing our amateur urban archaeology, we found a surprising amount of items along the river banks, in the waters and even stashed in crevices that ran like veins through the crumbling rock ledges. Broken pieces of China plates, old glass bottles, rusted tools and even the remnants of an old truck lay trashed down in the rocky gorge, things that blurred the lines of being considered an artifact or garbage.

I knew this area was hit hard during the flood of 1927 and artifacts, cars and even entire homes were swept up in swollen brown tides down this part of the river, depositing much that still rests below wet rocks and Hemlock trees today. I even was able to dig up old newspaper accounts that were printed when the disaster was happening. One vivid memory was reported by a woman, who watched an entire house be swept down the river, almost entirely intact.



An early stereoscope view of the area known as The Vector, early 1800s, before the dams and industry. The Lamoille River gorge was a wild place. Photo: UVM Landscape Change Program



Early explorers on the Lamoille River near Milton Falls, early 1800s. Photo: UVM Landscape Change Program



Ritchie Avenue is one of Milton's more impressive thoroughfares. The quiet road follows the pools of the Lamoille River before dropping down a series of ledges offering great views of the Lamoille and the towns rolling hills that stretch out to Lake Champlain. The distracting road was built to accommodate the construction of a pulp mill down in the vector, which once employed over 100 people. A strike in 1925 closed it, and the flood of 1927 destroyed it.



The incline railroad that carted lumber at the pulp mill, ran up the steep banks and towards where present day Mackey Street is. Years and years ago, someone told me that one of the rods or bolts from the supports could still be seen in those woods today, if you know where to look. But I can't verify this, as I haven't been able to find it.

She said she was able to look inside a broken window and see someone's bed that had been turned down, as if the person was just about to turn in for the night.

A better understanding of the flood also gave me a better understanding of the area I was going to explore. Not surprisingly, its popular with people who like to metal detect who are still finding things transplanted from the flood and years onwards, so seeing all of this rubbish down there wasn't a shocker. But something didn't quite fit. One odd find was that a certain crevice seemed to be filled with trash – but it was put there by someone. This

wasn't naturally occurring. Someone had been down there at one point, trying to fill it up...

After a while of picking at the pieces and dislocating rocks, we were able to catch a peek deeper into

the crevice, which expanded far back into a dark rocky chasm. It was evident that there was in fact more to see, and it did extend backwards, but I knew it wasn't what I was looking for. Granted, the space had long been filled in by dead leaves and garbage, but it seems too narrow for what could be considered a tunnel. No man could seemingly fit back there, without the aid of tools and a great deal of ensuing noise. Either way, I stopped my efforts.

I came up empty on August's exploration, but in October, another lead would unexpectedly manifest itself, and it was promising. Meeting up with childhood friend Zach, I found myself in a location I normally avoid, a hole in the wall bar and pool joint in Essex Junction.

I was there to speak with a friend of Zach's, someone who grew up in the Clark mansion and knew the building well. The house still belongs to her family today. When Zach had mentioned I was interested in the Clark tunnel, she said she needed to meet me in person.

And, she happened to be the bar tender who served us our drinks. Those who know me well are aware of the great cosmic relief that I often feel far more in my element in a location that is "off limits" to society, as opposed to legally being inside a dimly lit bar underneath a perfume of cigarettes and sweat. But she was all smiles, and her



The flood of 1927 is mentioned frequently in conversation of Vermont history, as the flood completely rearranged Vermont culture and infrastructure, and the after-efforts built much of the state we know today. The UVM Landscape Change Program archives has lots of photos of Milton pre and post flood, which gave me a startling impression of what was lost. This is the former town square, or "Downtown Milton" (1890). Joseph Clark's office building can be seen on the immediate right, and was the only building in this photograph to survive the flood and exist into present day Milton. Phelps's Store, which wasn't photographed, also still stands underneath modern day red vinyl siding. Today, Route 7 is more or less, built right over this area.

enthusiasm put me in a good mood. "Oh man, that house is definitely haunted!" she exclaimed. Though that wasn't exactly my crux, I had to chuckle. "As the story goes, the house might be haunted by Joseph Clark?" I questioned, now amused.

"Nope" she replied. "We actually think it's a woman". Old records state that Clark was once married to a Colchester woman; Lois Lyon, which possibly could explain this. Over the years, she and her family have heard the sounds of high heels clacking on hardwood floorboards upstairs, and of course, whenever one would go and investigate, the second floor would be empty. She also recalled the upstairs being creepy as a kid, a place she wasn't all that fond of hanging around in. Other accounts like phantom cold chills and the unmistakable feeling of being watched upstairs she also said were pretty common. But damn it, was there a tunnel?

Much to my pleasure, the mystery was finally confirmed. There was in fact a tunnel, and she has seen it! Now to get to the bottom of things.

Opacity

In the cellar walls of the Clark mansion is the clear outline of a door that sits well below the grassy lawn, now sealed up. But the distinctive outline of a door cleared up all skepticism. Also in the basement was another relic I found to be very cool – a massive cast iron safe that once belonged to Joseph Clark still sat in the wall. Though much of the mansion had been renovated over the centuries due to it's many reincarnations, a few authentic pieces of the place still remained. She explained to me that the tunnel had to be sealed up, because local kids kept getting



Starting on November 2nd, an estimated four to nine inches of rain drenched Vermont and turned rivers into raging destructive torrents. Because it was late Autumn, the dry ground was unable to absorb the water. Soon, Milton residents watched as the Lamoille River turned River Street into an accurate description of it's name. Photo: UVM Landscape Change Program



Flood waters on River Street in Milton, 1927. Photo: UVM Landscape Change Program



This is one of my favorite photos I was able to dig up, because it awesomely depicts the destructive powers of nature. In this blurry shot, it shows the Star Theater sink and wash away before a crowd of onlookers. Photo: UVM Landscape Change Program

into the tunnel and using that as

passage inside the building, where they would steal and break things. This happened even after the building reverted back into a private residence in 1994, so actions finally had to be taken. What a shame. By now, the tunnel is more or less unsafe to enter as well, due to neglect over the years.

However, I don't want to deceive you folks. This information was directly given to me from the niece of the current



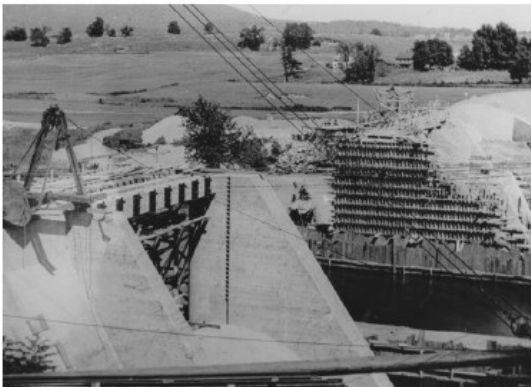
Post flood damage. Photo: UVM Landscape Change Program



The remodeled town square after the flood, with Joseph Clark's office building and Phelps's store the only surviving buildings. Photo: UVM Landscape Change Program



One of more popular tales of Milton lore is of the village underneath Lake Arrowhead. Basically, people claimed that downtown Milton was flooded underneath the lake when it was built, meaning there are a collection of soggy farmhouses at the bottom of the lake. As a kid, I even heard stories of scuba divers diving into the lake and setting foot on the roof of a house. After extensive digging, I was able to find this picture. This shows River Street, or Route 7 north of the bridge, which is now the Lake Arrowhead Causeway. These houses all sat where Route 7 is now.



In 1936, The Public Electric Light Company began constructing a dam above Clark's Falls, which would create the 750 acre Lake Arrowhead and provide a source of hydroelectricity. At the time, the Burlington Free Press lauded it as a technological marvel.



Luman Holcombe, a longtime Milton resident and respected community physician, was the one who suggested the name

Annie's. Astonishingly, the remnants of the actual speak easy can still be seen today below the building, which really hasn't changed all that much. The basement is a traditional old Vermont cellar, low ceilings, stone walls, and filled with things that crawl. The old iron door into the tunnel is still there too, the very door I was told about so long ago.

Were there other tunnels? Maybe. But the affor-mentioned flood of 1927 and post reconstruction completely wiped any other leads I could possibly have. And as for that tunnel or cave near the Vector, I wasn't successfully able to find

building owner, that owner also declined my phone calls to seek a tour of the place, which disappointed me a bit.

So the fabled tunnel is now proven to exist. But where does it go? It runs down to the basement of the defunct Irish Annie's Pub at the bottom of the hill. It's original purpose was so that Joseph could travel from his office to his house conveniently, but over the years, it's very nature of being direct and discrete inspired a few other uses. During prohibition, it was reinvented as a smugglers' tunnel, which allowed rum runners to transport goods into a speak easy

that once operated out of the basement of Irish



The collection of items we were able to dig out of the crevice in the cliffs. All of the following photos were taken in the dying days of summer, 2014.



DSC_0874_pe



DSC_0884_pe

that either. Perhaps something is still there, just filled in with erosion or a rock slide over the years. Though my lead at The Vector was a bit of a disappointment, I soon found out about other caves in the gorge with their own lore. Some rumored to be the hideouts of smugglers in the embargo act days of the 1800s and dry 1920s, and transitioned as hangouts by local youth and now, cavers looking for a thrill. Some are only accessible by kayak, weather permitting, and offer creepy claustrophobic excursions into dark spaces.

This blog entry has been one of my favorite pieces to write so far. By trying to do research on what I assumed would be a straightforward topic, I kept stumbling on more information and stories that continued to morph and blurred whatever side of the line between reality and fantasy you wanted to be on, far too many for your blogger to fit in this already lengthy article.

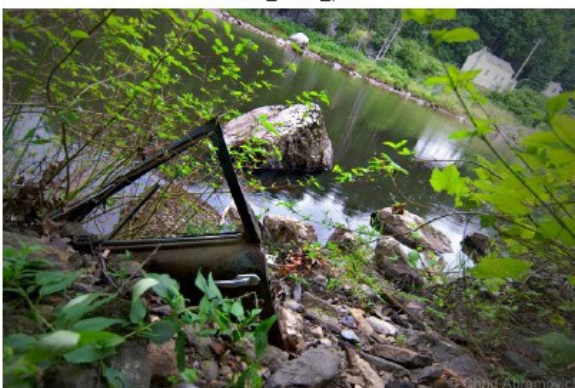


DSC_0886_pe



DSC_0887_pe

One night while sitting in the living room of a former friend's house, his dad told me their old



DSC_0891_pe



DSC_0873

farmhouse was built in the early 1900s, out of an old barn built in the 1800s, and was dragged to Milton by oxen from it's former position where the airport in South Burlington is now. I guess the house contained many other cool details, but sadly we've since lost touch.

Another favorite find of mine was a few years back, when a WW2 medal belonging to a Nebraska man was found stuffed in a VCR cassette and stashed inside a tree. No one knew

exactly how the medals ended up in Vermont, or why.

Milton is a cool town, and the people who live there have their share of extraordinary stories. I have quite a few other

Milton points of interest and esoterica that I plan on writing about in the future. Until then, thanks for the inspiration Milton.

If you missed it, I was recently interviewed by Stuck In Vermont and Seven Days. If you'd like to learn a little bit more about your blogger, feel free to check out my interview.

15 Comments on "Milton Mysteries: The Tunnel Underneath Main Street"

1. Stuart Clough
November 4, 2015

I only have one thing to say. That was fantastic reading! I loved it!

▀ Chad Abramovich
November 4, 2015

Thanks Stuart! I'm glad you enjoyed it!

2. Jon Fenner
November 4, 2015

Hey Chad,

I've been following your blog for about a year now, and I'm always excited to see a new post in my inbox! We've only been in Vermont for about 3 years now, and your stories are a great way to get some uncommon history!

• Chad Abramovich
November 5, 2015

Thanks for the kind words Jon! Glad you're enjoying the ride. By all means, if you happen to come across anything interesting or weird, feel free to send some leads my way!

3. Tom Sawyer
November 4, 2015

That is amazing! You really did a profound write up.

4. Tom Sawyer
November 4, 2015

Profound write up! Brilliant!! We love you Chad! Encore! Encore!

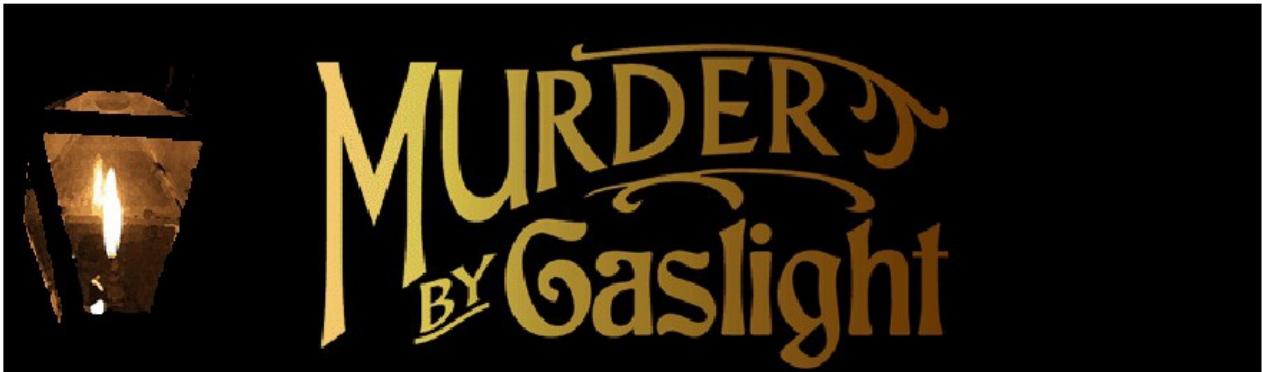
5. Sue Wylie
November 5, 2015

Wonderful read! Love your sense of adventure and wonder. We've wondered about the tunnel ever since we heard about it.

6. Michael J. Curtiss
November 5, 2015

The juxtaposition of the historical with the contemporary in this piece makes for a compelling narrative. You always do a bang-up job with your essays, but this one is exemplary. Well done.

7. Emily Jarvis
November 8, 2015



A compendium of information, resources and discussion on notable nineteenth century American murders.

Saturday, May 14, 2016

Two Murderers Murder Each Other.

Little Murders

(From *Trenton State Gazette*, Trenton, New Jersey, May 2, 1871)

Two Murderers Murder Each Other.

Two Murderers Murder Each Other.
One of the most remarkable personal rencontres ever recorded in the annals of this city occurred on Tuesday last, resulting in the instant death of the notorious William E. Rose, and of the equally notorious Jesse Robinson. Rose shot Robinson fatally through the body and then ran. The dead man (as it were) pursued, without heeding the icy hand of death upon his vitals, or the dread eternity, upon whose very brink he reeled, and, with his last agonies of exertion, emptied his revolver at his enemy, inflicting wounds which proved instantly fatal, after which he himself almost instantly expired. Since the event this community breathes freer, as many citizens of Jefferson were constantly apprehensive of violence from one or the other of these men. Several suits brought against them in the name of the state of Texas will abate on account of their death. Several of these indictments were for assault with intent to murder. It is a curious coincidence that Rose and Robinson were both convicted of murder by military commissions and sentenced to death. The findings in the case of Robinson were disapproved by General Reynolds and he was set at liberty. The findings in the case of Rose were either not acted on by General Reynolds or else President Grant dodged the responsibility of ordering the execution of the sentence.—*Jefferson (Texas) Radical*, April 8.

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Jefferson (Texas) Radical, April 8.

"Two Murderers Murder Each Other." *Trenton State Gazette*, 2 May 1871.

Posted by Robert Wilhelm

2 comments :

Marisha R says:

May 15, 2016 at 12:22 AM

Wow the problem took care of its self in the end right, bizarre

mycatisaudrey says: May 15, 2016 at 12:53 AM

The fact that Robinson was able to kill Rose - even though he was fatally wounded - is extraordinary! They were both bad men, but, I think it's Robinson who was the bigger badass.

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Will UFOs ever leave the space station alone?

By JAKE ELLISON, SEATTLEPI.COM STAFF

Updated 9:10 am, Tuesday, April 19, 2016

seattlepi.com

<http://www.seattlepi.com/local/science/article/Will-UFOs-ever-leave-the-space-station-alone-7257467.php>



Screen grab from video by Scott C. Waring of ufosightingsdaily.com of a "UFO" tracking the International Space Station.

On Aug. 23 around midday this "light" or reflection of sunlight appeared near the



This image was taken from the live feed recording on Ustream from the International Space Station on Aug. 23 around midnight. This light appeared at just after 2 hours into the recording, after appearing earlier in the video. The image has not been altered or brighten, only zoomed in on from a computer.



Screen grab from video by Scott C. Waring of ufosightingsdaily.com of a "UFO" tracking the International Space Station.



Screen grab from video by Scott C. Waring of ufosightingsdaily.com of a "UFO" tracking the International Space Station.

International Space Station, as seen in a Ustream recorded video from NASA TV's live stream from the ISS. The light -- okay call it a UFO -- stayed in that exact relative position with the station for minutes at a



id UFO Shows Up At Space Station; NASA C
ad, April 2016, UFO Sighting News.

Screen grab from video by Scott C. Waring of ufosightingsdaily.com of a "UFO" tracking the International Space Station.



On Aug. 23 around midday this "light" or reflection of sunlight appeared near the International Space Station, as seen in a Ustream recorded video from NASA TV's live stream from the ISS. The light -- okay call it a UFO -- stayed in that exact relative position with the station for minutes at a time, appearing and brightening and then disappearing several times. Remember, the ISS is traveling at roughly 17,000 mph. This and the following images have not been altered or brightened, only zoomed in on. A similar light was spotted briefly in an Aug. 3 video from the same source. That much shorter appearance (shown in the following three slides) is what caught the attention of UFO aficionados and started some stirrings in social media. We decided to see if we could find our own UFO and we did -- one much better, brighter and more mysterious than the other. Seems this sort of thing is happening all the time around the ISS. Aliens or sunlight reflecting off a bit of space junk or satellite? You decide.



This images was taken from the original recording of live video feed from the International Space Station on Aug. 3.

time, appearing and brightening and then disappearing several times. Remember, the ISS is traveling at roughly 17,000 mph. This and the following images have not been altered or brightened, only zoomed in on.

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On Aug. 23 around midday this "light" or reflection of sunlight appeared near the International Space Station, as seen in a Ustream recorded video from NASA TV's live stream from the ISS. The light -- okay call

Nope.

As the fanfare surrounding the latest video of a blurry, light-encrusted, diamond- or horseshoe-shaped space craft pacing the International Space Station proves (video below, photos above), humans really really want to see UFOs. And anything enough humans want to see, some human will find evidence of and post it on the Internet.

After all, conspiracies, porn and convincing you that you have a terminal illness are why the Internet was born.

And it's all in fun, especially when the video feed from the ISS cuts off while some anomalous light smear is present. Those feeds cut off all the time, and you have to watch dozens of hours of them to see both a light (which we found also and present in a video below, photos above) AND have the video feed snap off.

But there out there, all you have to do is watch a lot of video ... but hey, called it binge watching for science.

And, science it is! Those folks have created a hypothesis about space aliens watching Earth and, thus, NASA covering it up. They observe the only space data they have access to — video and photos from

the space agency itself — looking for anomalies (UFOs) and evidence that NASA is covering them up and then they report what they see. That's it: Pure objective science!

Here's a video we made of a UFO tracking the station:

The latest video is just such science, but there's a particular problem that shows up in these videos, including the one we made from actual NASA footage: The light stays in perfect relative position to the station. (Suggesting to me it's an artifact in the camera or video data.)

Now, we can imagine a scenario in which a UFO — a space ship built by an Intelligent Space Species (ISS), sent across untold reaches of the void to hover over this blue oasis in the cosmos and do ... nothing ... just hover around, chat with NASA and occasionally suck up and then spit out a crazy human being (just for a little fun ... like some merry band of galactic or, hell, intergalactic pranksters) — would keep pace with the space station.

But we have to really work at it. We have to decide that the alien space craft is orbiting Earth at the exact same speed and in the exact same trajectory of the station. I can imagine it, but then I can imagine a lot of things.

Anyway, one day it might be true. One day aliens may show up. I just think that when that happens, the fact of it will quickly overwhelm the ability of our or any government to keep it hidden. It'd be like World War III breaking out but kept a secret.

Jake Ellison can be reached at 206-448-8334 or jakeellison@seattlepi.com. Follow Jake on Twitter at twitter.com/Jake_News. Also, swing by and *LIKE* his page on Facebook. If Google Plus is your thing, check out our science coverage here.

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Underground Retail and Office Space Planned at Subway Terminal Building

ladowntownnews.com

LADT NEWS



Underground Retail and Office Space Planned at Subway Terminal Building

• Photo by Hunter Kerhart

The underground levels of the 1925 Subway Terminal Building originally housed a Red Line subway station. Now building owner Forest City is looking at turning 130,000 square feet of space into a retail and creative office hub.

• Photo by Hunter Kerhart

The lower levels of the Subway Terminal Building are being envisioned by Forest City Residential West and brokerage firm JLL as a site for office space and large retail stores.

Planned at Subway Terminal Building

• By Nicholas Slayton

Nearly a century ago, subway riders arriving in and leaving Downtown Los Angeles used an underground rail station at the southwest corner of Fourth and Hill streets. Now there's a plan to bring people back to the subterranean territory, though trains are not part of it — shopping is.

Cleveland-based developer Forest City is undertaking an ambitious plan to turn the lower levels of the Subway Terminal Building into a retail and creative office complex. It would repurpose 130,000 square feet of space on the ground floor and two underground levels of the building just north of Pershing Square.

+1

The underground levels of the 1925 Subway Terminal Building originally housed a Red Line subway station. Now building owner Forest City is looking at turning 130,000 square feet of space into a retail and creative office hub. Photo by Hunter Kerhart

The developer turned the above-ground portion of the building into the 277-apartment Metro 417 Lofts in 2005. Now Frank Frallicciardi, director of development for Forest City Residential West, said they are in the process of bringing the 91-year-old edifice up to fire and safety standards, but are waiting on major restoration work until tenants are secured. Brokerage firm JLL has been hired to market the space.

"We're trying to keep the history of the building while creating a really great center for boutique retail and restaurants," said Danielle Cornwell, a senior associate with JLL. "If you look at how well Grand Central Market was done, you can see the rise of really interesting mixes of food halls and creative offices."

Forest City originally planned to develop the lower levels after finishing Metro 417. The recession

torpedoed the idea.

Now, said Frallicciardi, the market has recovered, and developers and retailers are trying to get ahold of any space possible in Downtown. About two years ago, Forest City began looking at resuscitating the retail and office vision.

"We got to the point where enough people were knocking on the door unsolicited that we felt we needed to find the right set of tenants and plan it all out," Frallicciardi said.

Red Car Memories

The Subway Terminal Building, designed by the architecture firm Schultze and Weaver, opened in 1925 as one of the hubs for the Red Car subway system, and funneled riders into and out of the heart of Downtown. After the Red Car system faded, a section of the 12-story building's underground space served as offices for the Veterans Administration. It has been vacant for decades.

+1

The lower levels of the Subway Terminal Building are being envisioned by Forest City Residential West and brokerage firm JLL as a site for office space and large retail stores. Photo by Hunter Kerhart

The 40,000-square-foot ground floor has an Art Deco feel, with ornately carved columns and 18-foot-high copper ceilings. There are also two large skylights that are currently covered. Forest City plans to uncover them and create an open market of vendors flanked by office space and larger eateries.

The first underground level, where travelers once passed through turnstiles, is about 40,000 square feet and has eight-foot ceilings. Frallicciardi said he expects it will serve as office space for one or two tenants, possibly for architecture or design firms. (The ceiling will not be raised, he said.)

The lowest level has 20-foot ceilings and about 45,000 square feet of space. Frallicciardi expects it would hold up to three tenants, and said a gym might be a fit. The old train tunnel is at one end of the floor, though it is owned by the city and closed off.

The project comes as the Downtown retail scene is exploding, with clusters of stores in places such as Broadway, the revitalized Bloc and FIGat7th complexes, and the One Santa Fe project in the Arts District. More retail would arrive in The Grand on Grand Avenue, the 1.1 million-square-foot Broadway Trade Center at Eighth Street and Broadway, and At Mateo, also in the Arts District.

Still, the new project's size and location in the heart of Downtown make it a viable destination, according to Justin Weiss, a senior associate at real estate firm Kennedy Wilson. He pointed to the building's history and design, and said additional pedestrian traffic would come from projects such as the upcoming Clark Hotel, across the street at 426 S. Hill St.

Weiss also cited a Downtown residential population that has swelled to 58,000 people, with more expected to come soon as new apartment and condominium buildings open. He said the local retail scene is actually playing catch up.

"If you want to do lots of shopping, you're going to Melrose, to Old Town Pasadena, to the Beverly Center, these different places that you can spend all day shopping. Downtown doesn't have that," he said. "At Mateo, The Bloc, these shopping centers are going to be their own things. It might be a bit similar, but a rising tide floats all boats."

One aspect of Forest City's project goes counter to life in Los Angeles: the underground component. The city's temperate weather lures people outdoors, and while there is subterranean shopping at Fifth and Flower streets, another largely underground retail location, the Los Angeles Mall, has underperformed for decades.

Still, Weiss said Downtown has a history of activating smaller basement spaces, such as the bar the Edison in the Higgins Building. He said the shopping center at Fifth and Flower draws large crowds during the lunch rush. With the right tenants, he said, the Subway Terminal Building could succeed.

Cornwell of JLL is even more bullish. She said that the overall package of the project's size, the likely mix of tenants and the location will bring in people.

"It's near the Metro. It's near Pershing Square and the restaurant Perch is right across the street," she said. "Our main goal now is to activate it on the street to bring people inside."

The search for occupants is ongoing. Frallicciardi said that once a tenant, big or small, is inked, it would take eight months to a year to renovate their space. The price of the project will depend on the tenants and what kinds of improvements are required.

Though work is early, Frallicciardi said he hopes to have people starting improvements by the end of the year.

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Logo

Posted on January 18, 2016 By Chad Abramovich

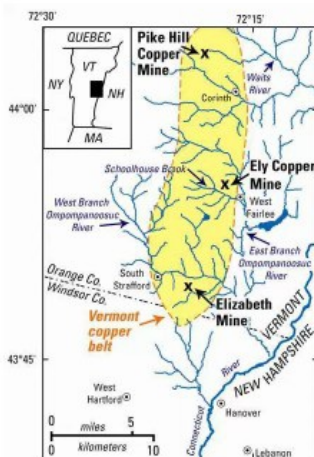


© Chad Abramovich

Vermont's visage is one of scenic mountains and an eye magnetic lack of industry, which makes the state a notable contrast from it's neighbors. But a few decades ago, our Green Mountains were combed with industry that depended on the state's naturally occurring topography and it's profitable innards. Many of the state's rural areas have once been cannibalized for their precious commodities that lay underneath the ground, and if you look below the surface, many small communities still

bear the scars from irresponsible practices and their related pollution.

No one is quite sure how copper was discovered in Vermont, but according to hazy hear say, it's inception to the state economy was pretty much circumstantial. Legend says that farmers and land owners in what's now Orange County began noticing the indicator rusty discoloration in snow drifts on their properties while out tapping Maple trees or out while fox hunting towards the late 1700s. That discovery ensured that a few decades later, businessmen were compelled to begin mining for copper in Vermont's newly emerging copper "belt". Though the boom was contained in a pretty small area limited to southern Orange County, it's mines became fabled for a brief time for their voluminous outputs that took insufferable work to tease out, one of them becoming the largest copper producing mine in America for a brief time.



Vermont's copper belt, in Orange County | USGS

Vershire's Ely Mine was said to have a more intriguing discovery. It was said that as early as the late 1700s, inconspicuous trails of sulphury smoke and fireballs were seen over the forests of John Richardson's farm on Dwight Hill in Vershire. But it wasn't until after a rainstorm in 1812 that would clear up any speculation, when his daughter Becky stepped on and sunk up to her knee in a mound that looked like a "burnt outcropping" while walking the property. Realizing she was stuck fast, she began to holler for help. When she was pulled out, her leg was found coated in an orange mud and the hole filled with an odorous sulphury mess.

Encouraged by this colorful evidence, in 1820, a group of local farmers got together and formed The Farmers Company and began purchasing mineral rights in the area in order to produce copperas. By 1833, the aforementioned Richardson farm was surveyed by a Issac Tyson, described as "probably the leading industrial chemist of the day". Tyson was the first to attempt drilling at what would be known as the Ely mine. Around 1833, he started boring an adit (a horizontal tunnel) to intersect the vein from the

southern side of the hill, but two years later and ninety-four feet without striking ore, Tyson's partners lost faith in the project (possibly influenced by the financial panic of 1834) and pulled out despite Tyson's protests.

But by now, the tantalizing word that copper was underneath Vermont's hills was out, and more people

Obscure Vermont



Some old foundations could still be detected amongst the birch trees and tall weeds.



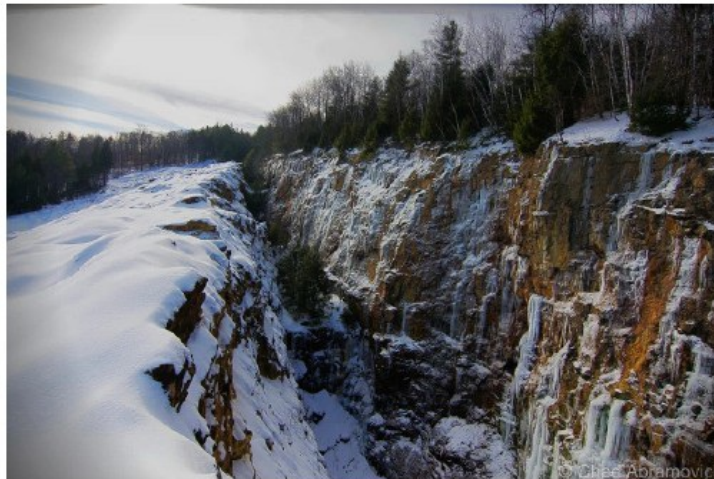
At first, we thought this stone lined hole in the ground was an old well, but now I'm not so sure once I discovered that below the water's surface, there were dark subterranean passageways that lead back beyond a discernible line of sight.



The Ely mine shafts are dangerous and unpredictable. With so little experience, I opted against going that far inside. At least until I can head back with an experienced tour guide.



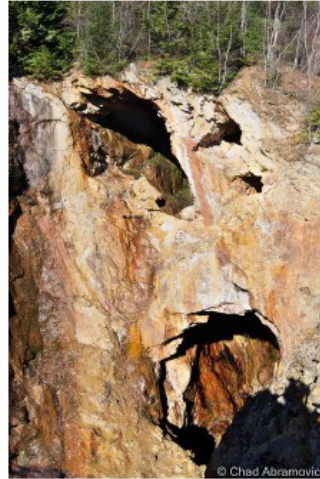
The south cut and it's adits in the winter of 2016, covered with layers of dangerous ice.



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wanted in. In 1854, The Vermont Copper Mining Company was created and immediately picked up where Tyson left off. They purchased the property for \$1,000 and ironically, they only needed to dig an additional four feet in Tyson's discontinued adit to strike the vein he was looking for.

One of the original investors in the mine was a New Yorker named Smith Ely, who would eventually take control over the mine and company after the civil war, which produced a huge demand for copper. With a new national ban on foreign copper, the need for domestic production stirred an uproar. Under Ely's leadership, the mine that now wore his last name became a significant operation and would grow to become the largest copper mine in the United States for a time, reaching a peak employment by November, 1881 of 851 curious and voracious miners.



In 1876, Smith Ely's grandson Ely Goddard would take over the mine. His first act of business was to change his last name to Ely-Goddard in honor of his grandfather. His next act would be to make himself more at home, by constructing himself a lavish vanity project in the middle of the village; a mansion which he named Elysium (pictured in the photo above, the white building with the central copula), a reference to the ancient Greek concept of the afterlife, and perhaps demonstrating some of his

Of those toiling in those dangerous and rather grim conditions were both adults and children, some as young as ten. Most were Cornish and Irish immigrants, with the rest of the employment being made of Germans, Italians and Canadians. Cornish miners specifically had a reputation for being rough, rowdy and reckless, which made them sought after employees for many American construction feats. This stereoview of the Ely miners was taken sometime between 1860 and 1883, according to vague photograph records. I especially enjoy the miners hanging out the second story windows. | UVM Landscape Change Program



A group of men wearing long pants and long shirts, one carrying a lamp, enters one of the small and dark mine shafts at Ely, being supported by wooden poles and piles of rocks. Conditions were dangerous. Old records tell of miners packing their ears with cotton to prevent themselves from going deaf from the loud noises of the drilling. There was no workplace safety protocols and no protection, so miners often had to think creatively when they were concerned with prognostics. The men who were employed in the industry were often just as tough as the harsh environment they worked in. Some old timers who actually recall the copper mines stoically allude to just how obscene they were, described as



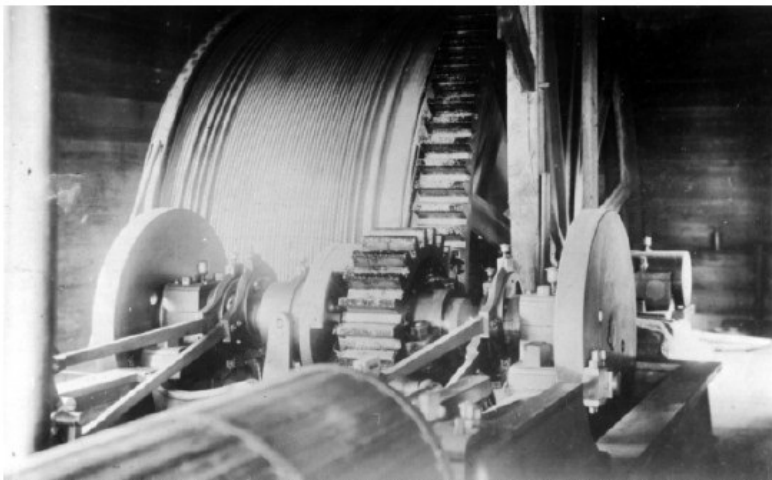
This compelling photo shows a group of men deep down in what they called "The Back Stopes", or the deepest section of the Ely mine, which was supported by steel L-beams and more loose rocks that fell from the shaft walls. Gotta make use of all those rocks I suppose. It definitely takes someone with a particular cast of mind to labor in conditions like this | UVM Landscape Change Program

exaggerated swagger with a play on his last name. The mansion was regarded as one of the finest feats of architecture in otherwise hardscrabble orange

*the sort of place where a man did what he had to do. | UVM
Landscape Change Program*



This is what the miners were looking for. This is the main body of Chalcopyrite ore at Ely, aka, Yellow Copper. | UVM Landscape Change Program



This photograph taken circa 1860 shows a large wheel wound with heavy cable, which was most likely used to pull mining cars to and from the site. There is a smaller gear that is propelled by the engine in the bottom left of the image. | UVM Landscape Change Program

county, and soon became a place where grand parties would be held where Ely-Goddard's rich friends from New York, Newport RI and as far away as Paris would come and have nights of debauchery while the miners whose dwellings encircled the mansion enclave were close to starving.

The Ely's entrepreneurial spirit earned them some lauded accolades in the Green Mountains, including Ely-Goddard being elected to the house of representatives in 1878, and the company lawyer Roswell Farnum being elected governor in 1880, which was no doubt a period that was very kind to the mining industry. Or maybe I'm just being cynical.



A mine crawling with bodies required a village to be built, and one that would eventually be made of more than 100 buildings was constructed over hillsides melding with a gamut of mine related waste byproducts and very little vegetation. | UVM Landscape Change Program

But having an upper hand in politics couldn't save the mines against more profitable opportunities out west. As a result, the price of copper began to fall as domestic supplies increased. Mining in Vermont was hard. The deposit veins produced little copper that required more work than payoff to access, and most mines were far away from convenient transportation corridors. In 1881, Smith Ely sold his shares in the mine to Ely-Goddard and the newly in the picture Francis

Cazin, a German engineer who planned on saving the mine by profusely dumping money into it. But it



The village and the mine collectively became known as Copperfield, which would eventually become more prominent than Vershire, the actual town the mine was in. To make things a bit more interesting, Vershire would briefly change it's name to Ely in 1878, but was changed back to Vershire just 4 years later when the mine fell on financial troubles it would never recover from.



The ore was mined from adits that went deep into the mountains. It was roasted for 2-3 months in beds that gave off vile sulfur fumes and then taken to the smelters, huge furnaces lined with brick (the long rectangular building pictured above). Tall brick chimneys were built up the side of the hill to take away the worst of the smelter emissions, but not far enough, as most of the smoke pretty much permeated around the slopes and the village, creating acid rain which decimated the landscape around the mine. A written historical account of the pollution I was able to dig up says that "the country around the village is ... completely destitute of vegetation....For some distance around, all vegetable growth is sparse and stunted. And pervading everything is a most beastly odor from the roasting beds." To this day, a century after the mine was closed, nothing grows around the smelter site. | UVM Landscape Change Program

didn't work, and Ely-Goddard blamed and fired Cazin, who sued the company in retribution.

On June 29th, 1883, all the bad financial investments and a newly emerging series of lawsuits caught up with the company. By now, the Ely mine boasted the largest copper mining shaft dug in Vermont, unconfidently considered to be anywhere between 3,400 feet, to 4,000 feet deep. For a comparison, our largest mountain, Mount Mansfield, is 4,395 feet. But despite the efforts, only about 3% of what miners were carving out was actually marketable copper, and the cost of operations, such as hoisting apparatuses, pumps that kept the shafts from flooding and the tons of wood needed to burn to keep the smelting processes going, had drained their bank account.

Their solution was posting a sign telling miners that the mines would be closed until they agreed to take a pay cut, which of course didn't go over so well. The miners who had already gone two months without pay, revolted in what is sometimes called **The Ely War**, which is both considered the most important instance of labor unrest in Vermont, and to my surprise, almost never talked about. Having already worked for months without paychecks, the miners had reached their limits of toleration and went on strike. They raided the company store, started destroying company buildings in the village, acted without foresight and broke the pumps that kept the shafts from flooding to make the mines unprofitable for the owners, and stole all the gunpowder and threatened to do further extensive damage with it if they didn't get their pay.

To add insurance, they all marched to Smith Ely's house in West Fairlee chanting "bread or blood!" The startled Ely, who was desperate to get the angry mob off his lawn, assured them that they would all get paid. But instead, he sent out a distressful telegram to governor

Barstow and the national guard was deployed to arrest the rioters.

The militia marched into Copperfield underneath the stars, found the strike leaders and arrested them in their beds. As the sun rose above the martian landscape around the mines and the other miners awoke from their beds, they saw their strike leaders indignantly being marched down the main drag in irons. The so called Ely War was over. Another interesting account I found online told of a different, more earnest story.

On the morning of July 6th, 184 members of the national guard marched into Copperfield expecting to



This photo from 1860 shows the extensive pollution from the mining operations; a fetid place of tailings piles, slag and wood scraps from older mine structures. | UVM Landscape Change Program

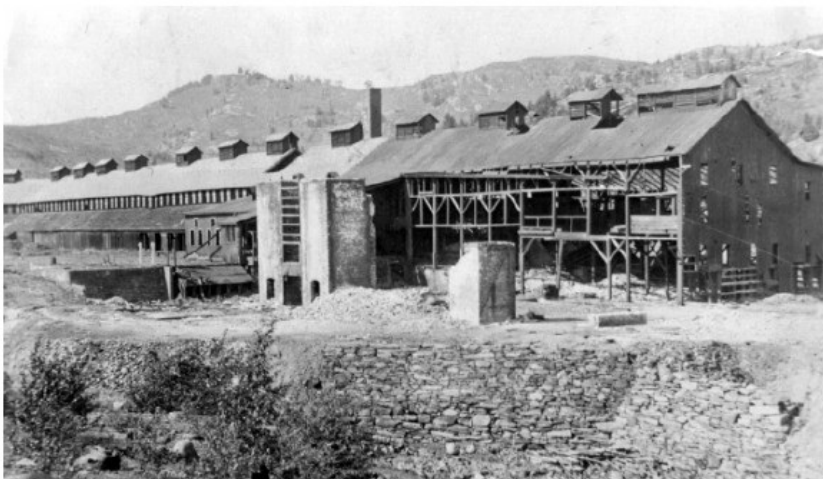


A view of the Ely mine, Copperfield and West Hill taken around 1900. Eventually, they built buildings on top of the huge tailings piles because they grew so large. The landscape is a barren and desolate one, devoid of vegetation. | UVM Landscape Change Program

find an unruly mob of miners waiting for them, but instead found eerily quiet buildings built upon slag pile debris. The miners, who were waking up by then, noticed the national guard soldiers walking around town, and went out to converse with them. After telling them their grievances, the national guard sympathized instead of incarcerated, and gave the miners all their food rations before getting back on the train.

As these stories often end, the miners were never compensated, and the company went bankrupt by 1888 because ironically, they weren't able to meet their obligations because of all the damning facts pointing to the company's inevitable death. And, the mines were now underwater.

Because the mine was now virtually useless, it changed ownership a few times with hopes of re-opening before becoming permanently defunct by 1920. Elysium was sold for \$155 and moved to Lake Fairlee, which can still be seen today off state route 244, and the Copperfield Methodist church can now be seen in tiny Vershire village off state route 113, while the rest of the buildings became forsaken and slowly disintegrated to dust.



Some urban exploring far before my time! This is one of the smelting sheds at the Ely mine, taken around 1960, decades after it's abandonment, the wobbly structure still stands, regardless of glassless windows, slumping roof and walls that were more hole than wall. | UVM Landscape Change Program.

My friend Eric, a close friend from my college days, grew up in West Fairlee down the road from the Ely mine, which is how I found out about the place to begin with. So in the dying days of 2015, as the temperature dropped precipitously, we set out in his Subaru to go walk around his old high school stomping grounds.

Driving down state route 113 with Montreal's Stars playing softly from his iPod, we entered tiny Vershire, a name that's an agglomeration of Vermont and New Hampshire, and is either pronounced "Ver-shur" or "Ver-sheer", depending on who you are. It seems like it's a trivial

bone of contention between Vershire-ites. After the closer of the Ely mines, Vershire lost scores of it's



An abandoned entrance to one of the mines at Ely, summer 2006. | Collamer Abbott/UVM Landscape Change Program

population until it dwindled to just 236 inhabitants in 1960, making it the smallest town in already low populated Orange County. According to the 2010 census, the population has since grown to 730.

Off the town's main drag, which is the destitute state route 113, there is an easy to miss intersection with an evocatively incongruous name; Brimstone Corner. While I'm not sure of the story behind this curious name, I have my own theory. There are plenty of locales in Vermont named after the so called prince of darkness, such as Satan's Kingdom on Lake Dunsmore, and Devil's Den in Mount Tabor, to name a few. Superstitious settlers gave the suggestive geography their names years ago, when remote and rough patches of wilderness were foreboding, shadowy and full of rocks which made farming almost

impossible. It seemed to make sense to them that the Devil himself called these places home. However Brimstone Corner got it's name, I love the fact that it still appears on modern day map engines like Google.



Google Maps.

Death often ends a story, but in the cases of some forsaken places, they can also extend a bit in their celebrity. I've covered a few of them in this blog, and the Ely mine would fit right in I'd say. Exploring the historical oddity with Eric also meant that I got some of the inside details of it's strange and seemingly nefarious

local lore that has more or or less simultaneously garnered such a reputation and earned it some infamy with area youth, curious visitors and allegedly bad dudes that aren't necessarily connected to the mafia.



I love the sedentary enjoyment of getting lost browsing Google maps. Even though Vermont's copper belt is little more than a ghost, it's residue still sticks around in the form of names. Places like "Copperas Brook" and "Copper Flats" near South Strafford are a testament to what created

There's a corollary in the world of abandoned mines that the empty real estate is a great place for humanity's more ghastly truths. Apparently sometime in the early 2000s, vicinity pets began to go missing, mostly dogs. Eventually, curious visitors to the mine found several decomposing dog corpses stashed within Ely's dank mine tunnels. Later, the pieces would be put together and it appeared that local boys had been kidnapping and killing their canine victims. I also heard that human remains have been found underneath Dwight Hill as well, but I'm not completely sure of the veracity of both these tales.

In keeping with both traditions of mine shafts being a desirable place to dump unwanted variables or pesky things that could be considered evidence and sometimes buried secrets are difficult to keep buried, there was a local man who made good profit a decade or so ago, by kindly offering to dispose of rural Vermont's endless junked tire

the region.

population. Only, he was just dumping them at Ely, which was already considered a Superfund site that the time, and was somehow caught and penalized. A huge mound of tires still sits towards the upper part of the property that ring a beaver dam below a steep birch tree clumped ridge line. That part of the mine was eerily quiet, the only sound was our boots clomping through deceptive ground that was more mud than ground, the unmistakable odor of sulphury perfume inhaled by my nose that doesn't belie the truth of the matter here.

Eric also recalls the plight of schoolhouse brook which formed the line diminishing edge of his backyard, and how he recalls fish swimming in it's shallow waters as a kid, but as he grew and the river grew shades murkier, lifeforms were reduced significantly.

There was a strange beauty to the landscape though that also helped to establish the aura of mystery that tends to surround these sites. The ruins at Ely are a simple yet compelling depiction of our collective history here, a testimony to both prowess and irresponsibility. Not much remains at all of it's legacy here because of a massive cleanup initiated in 2011, which I couldn't help be a bit disappointed by, but in the end, there is something about these old mines and their stories that yield an irresistible intrigue to me. Oddly enough, I read that the property is also eligible to be inducted on the national register of historic places, but I'm a little lost as to what that distinction would actually do for the property.

Observing the beaver dam, I couldn't help but wonder if it was around when the mines were active, or more of a recent addition after the chaotic operations became ghosts. Beaver dams are built to last by design, which makes them historical landmarks, and there are plenty of still existing ones that have actually predated many of our settlements.



The mine's presence in the area was immediate from the road. The former smelter area is a stained, stony wasteland of yellow colored gravel and stone foundations encroached by brush.



With the November winds battering us in a spiteful fashion, we set out onto the huge property. A packed class D forest road lead us from the roadside up the hill towards the mine, passing a literal garbage dump along the way, containing everything from an old stove, literal hills of glass bottles, an old truck, and a gamut of relics from twinkie wrappers to empty boxes of bullets.

Though I didn't cover the Elizabeth Mine in this blog entry because it's already lengthy enough, it's very much worth noting. It's holds the distinction of being the oldest running copper mine in Vermont, running for 150 years before following the trend of Vermont's other mines and closing for good in 1958. The property was also inaugurated into the

Superfund family of sites, and underwent a massive clean up in 2010. Not much of anything remains of the Elizabeth, apart for a uniform green state historic marker on aptly named mine road in tiny South Strafford and a few uninteresting but politely demolished foundations. But it's the colossal open cut mines, dubbed to the point as the north and south cuts, that still remain on the property that are worth the surprisingly steep and deceptive hike up scrapped rock faces where former tailings piles were left, to the edge to gaze down at these huge and dangerous big digs of showmanship. The south cut is known



© Chad Abramovich

This sludgy waterway of rust is called Ely Brook, which runs through the property and brings all of the waste into other area rivers. The EPA proclaims that acid mine drainage is the primary cause of pollution here, or, the outflow of acidic water laced with high metal concentrations from both within the mines and the large waste dump piles. The tailings on the property are rich in metals and sulfides. As water passes over and through the tailings, sulfuric acid is produced and the metals within the tailings are dissolved and mobilized. In 2001, the Vershire wasteland got it's designation as a Superfund site, which meant federal dollars went into cleaning it up. Or, more realistically, attempting to keep the place in a state of arrested progression, making sure it can't pollute the area environment anymore than it already has. Cleanups began in September of 2011.



© Chad Abramovich

The brawny stone walls of the former ore roast bed site still stand, despite the intrusion of new growth trees through it.

<http://www.usgennet.org/usa/vt/county/orange/vershire/>

A short history of the Ely Mine by Paul Donovan

The Ely War, VPR | The Ely War, Virtual Vermont Internet Magazine

The blog, Vermont Deadline, which I just pleasantly discovered.

Paul Donovan, a Vermont mine enthusiast, has a very cool website that includes his photographs of his ventures into the mines, as well as a great drawn map of Ely mine's subterranean passageways. This gave me a good idea of the lay of the land. **I'd especially recommend my favorite of his photos, a set of slimy and disused rails still can be found underground in the Ely mines.

UVM Landscape Change Program, which is becoming one of my go-to sites for historical photographs

by cavers as quite the challenging adrenaline rush, and the north cut which is a more eroded copy of the south cut, is flooded and draws cliff jumpers and people looking for a place to cool off during the summer.

Sources/For More Information

Lots of research materials went into writing this piece, including:

EPA Superfund Ely Mine Site | EPA PDF booklet on the Ely Mine, which features both a handy map of the site as well as a map that illustrates how the acid drainage runoff effects the area watersheds.



and Vermont history.

I was very interested in exactly how copper was made, and got a good amount of information from this site

For other copper or Vermont enthusiasts like myself, you might enjoy this good documentary on copper mining in Vermont:

According to the EPA, there was about 100,000 tons of tailings and slag piles left on the property. Though cleanup has gotten rid of the stuff nearest the road, towards the back of the property is still filled with gigantic dunes covered with mangy looking birch trees, the only arboreal growth that will take root here.



According to a battered tin sign spayed with bullet holes near the road, The Ely Gun Club calls the shots for the huge property today, which allows hunters and gun enthusiasts to enjoy the property, which is practically the only thing you can do on it. We found much evidence of this on top of one of the tailings piles.



From the top of one of the domineering tailings piles, we were treated to some great views of Vermont's low profile hills, and in the distance, the grey saw tooth edged forms of New Hampshire's brawny White Mountains.

The Union ferry explosion: Hull's forgotten disaster

May 19th 2016

hulldailymail.co.uk

By Hull Daily Mail | Posted: August 02, 2015



DISASTER SCENE: The Humber Basin and east pier, now Minerva pier, where the paddle steamer Union exploded. Inset, an artist's depiction of a boiler explosion on a similar American ferry

It remains one of Hull's worst peace-time disasters. **Jamie Macaskill** reports on the tragic story of the ferry Union that blew up in Hull harbour

Thomas Jackson was standing on the deck of a ferry in Hull's Humber Basin. It had just gone 6am on a cloudless June morning in 1837 and the dockside was bustling.

Four steam-powered paddle ferries, the Don, Union, Adelaide and Albatross, were preparing for the morning's departures carrying scores of passengers to destinations up or across the Humber.

Mr Jackson, a Methodist minister, had just helped his wife and six children from the pier by Minerva Terrace and across the Union's deck to the Don, where they were to sail to Goole. As he crossed the Union, he recalled "a great many passengers, full of life and cheerfulness".

As Thomas stood with his two sons, there was a sudden loud mechanical popping like rivets flying from iron. Instinctively, he grabbed his boys, shielded them with his body and started to pray.

A second later, the Union exploded.

The sound, Thomas later recalled, was like "Mount Etna's roar". The blast wave swept across the basin in an instant together with a dense mass of steam, fire and dust. Moments later, timber, metal, people and bodies started landing in the water, on the decks and the docks alongside.

"My soul trembled on its balance," wrote Thomas. "I felt the boundary hour between time and eternity had approached.

"A large portion of Union boiler fell just behind me, a heavy bar of iron fell within inches of my head, a piece of wood close to my head on left. My back was covered with small portions of the vessel. On rising from my knees a dreadful cry met my ear – it was the cry of death."

Hull Maritime Museum



The steam paddle ferry Waterwitch in Hull. The Union was slightly smaller but of a similar design

The packed deck of the Union had been torn apart and its sides ripped open when its boiler exploded.

Its chimney stack flew into the sky, spiralling down through the air as it fell towards the dock. What remained of the hull started sinking immediately.

"People were struggling in water," Thomas wrote. "Others were mangled and bleeding corpses, some shrieking in agony with dreadful wounds and scalds. Timber, trunks, hats, bonnets, cloaks, clothes of every kind scattered in all direction."

Added to the apocalyptic scene, a rain of treacle, part of the Union's cargo, began to shower onto the devastation below.

On the dockside, where scores of people had been working, watching or waiting to board the steamers, the scene was chaos.

"People were running on the dockside screaming, moaning, praying, searching, calling for relatives and friends," wrote Thomas. It was, he said, "a scene of havoc, destruction and misery".

Within minutes, the first of hundreds of people from the city started arriving at the dock, among them those who knew relatives were on the Union.

The quay on East Pier, near Minerva Terrace, was strewn with wreckage, furniture, clothes and smouldering cargo.

Among the cries, Thomas heard someone scream "That's my son", another "that's my wife".

In Minerva Terrace, the top of the Union's boiler was found. A bale of goods was blown clean over the same street, smashing tiles from rooftops. A valve from the Union's engine was found in Humber Street and other wreckage in Wellington Street.

And among the wreckage were bodies. Joseph Matthews, the foreman of a dockside crane, had been last seen looking down from the pier onto the Union. He was found lifeless on the roof of a three-storey house.

A Mr Chatterton, a brewer and "respectable gentleman of Hull" was blown over the pier on to the Albatross.

A boatman in the basin had two bodies land in his boat, while another victim was seen being blown across the funnel of the Adelaide before falling into the Humber "at great distance".

Thomas, having found his family all blown off their feet but safe, joined a policeman who made it on board the Don to look for survivors and injured.

They found the body of one of the Don's passengers, Alice Dinsdale. "I assisted in adjusting the tattered garments," said Tomas. "She was horribly mutilated."

On the sinking Union, one last drama was taking place.

A Mrs Rose had been on the deck holding her baby. The infant had been torn from her arms in the blast.

As the wreck slipped below the water, her husband grasped her hand, but Mrs Rose had refused to leave. "I have lost my child, I cannot go," she was heard to say.

Moments later, the child was found in the wreckage and the Roses pulled to safety. The baby's head was severely injured and its face scalded, but, in the following weeks, made a full recovery.

For those less fortunate, the bodies were taken to nearby houses and the Minerva Pub and then to the Station House where relatives, friends and colleagues gathered to try to identify bodies.

In the first three hours, 17 bodies were found, three trapped in the submerged first class cabin of the Union. However, it is thought in the immediate chaotic aftermath of the explosion, more victims were carried out into the Humber, pulled away by the tide and lost. A large amount of luggage recovered at the scene remained unclaimed.

By the time the search ended, 23 bodies had been found and identified. The victims ranged from young travellers heading for the Union's destination of Gainsborough in Lincolnshire to tradesman and merchants working the Humber. Nine were women and five were crew, including a boy.

Because of the proximity to the Humber and its notorious tides, as well as the travelling trades of many passengers, the exact death toll may never be known.

After the final funerals in Hull, on June 21, an inquest was opened by the city's coroner, Mr James Thorney.

Witnesses were called to hearings at Mansion House and the Minerva Pub. At the conclusion, a charge of "death by manslaughter" was brought against the Union's engineer Joseph Gamble.

He was accused of allowing the boiler of the Union to become dangerously dry, allowing the chamber to overheat and explode.

[illegible]

Hull depended heavily on the so-called "steam packet" ferries like the Union, itself a new ship only recently launched in Gainsborough. Links to Grimsby,

"The awful scenes of the disastrously memorable 7th of June, when devastation and death were spread around me and my family – I stood among the living and the dead, when the shafts of death flew all around me in all directions – will depart from my memory only with life "

Comments

- Paul_at_Hull | August 02 2015, 11:24PM

Good bit of history remembered. Sad though.



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Unknown attackers rip heads off 40 chickens

09/05

thelocal.de

*The Local**Unknown attackers rip heads off 40 chickens***Unknown attackers rip heads off 40 chickens**

DPA/The Local · 17 May 2016, 13:56

Published: 17 May 2016
13:56 GMT+02:00**A farmer in central Germany woke up on Sunday morning to the horrifying sight of 40 of his chickens with their****heads ripped off by brute force.**

The attackers must have killed the helpless animals "with their bare hands," farmer Michael Lüft from Seligenstadt, southeast of Frankfurt, said.

"You would need a certain amount of strength to do that."

Whoever was behind the killings broke into the hen stalls by force.

Some of the birds had their heads completely torn off, while others had the skin and sinews torn from their bodies and pulled over their heads.

Police said that the violence of the act meant that witnesses must have seen or heard something.

"The animals must have been correspondingly terrified and caused noise," a police spokesman in Offenbach said.

Story continues below...

Officers believe that several perpetrators were behind the violence. The culprits also threw eggs against the walls and tipped over a number of barrels containing feed and water for the chickens.

Investigators are now calling for members of the public to come forward if they saw or heard anything.

DPA/The Local (news@thelocal.de)

The Local Europe GmbH
Schwedter Strasse 227
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Germany

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The Vatican's class on handling demons is alive and well: are exorcisms around the world on the rise?



Prophecy News

The Vatican's class on handling demons is alive and well: are exorcisms around the world on the rise?

April 14th, 2016, by Greg White

Demonic possessions are often chocked up to the world of mythology, but in recent years, the number of exorcisms performed has been on the rise. So much so that the Catholic Church in Rome is now offering a week-long course on how to perform exorcisms, expounding on the nature of angels and demons.

The course, titled "Exorcism and Prayer of Liberation" is in its eleventh year running and attracts over a thousand graduates. It is organized by the Sacerdos Institute in collaboration with the Group for Socio-religious Research

and Information (GRIS) and the International Association of Exorcists (IEA), according to Breitbart.

The intent of the course, lead by Father Pedro Barrajon, is to provide priests, doctors, psychologists and teachers with the tools necessary to distinguish a genuine possession from a psychological disorder in need of medical attention.

Where science and religion meet

This year's program will consist of a lineup of speakers from a variety of disciplines, encompassing psychologists, doctors, lawyers and dozens of priests. The lectures will be accompanied by panel discussions, including a Q&A with actual exorcists.

Barrajon told Breitbart that the the majority of his students are priests; however, a significant fraction are laypeople. He added that the activity of demons hasn't always been taken seriously. Accounts of demonic possession in the gospels are often attributed to "the ignorance of the age and a readiness to recur to supernatural causes to explain diseases like epilepsy or psychological disorders."

Nevertheless, this isn't true of all cases, Barrajon added. "It certainly doesn't eliminate the

clear references to the activity of the devil throughout the gospels," which, "is generally recognized now by scholars," he said.

Barrajon also stated that the Devil often meddles in human affairs, not through possessions, but through temptations. "The devil is the sworn enemy of God and his major concern is to separate us from God and his commandments, and to make us doubt God's goodness," he said.

Barrajon emphasized that experience and a deep prayer life are needed to separate genuine cases of possession from psychiatric disorders. "Traditionally there are certain signs that often accompany true cases of possession," he said. "Things that are difficult if not impossible to explain otherwise."

Symptoms of demonic possession include the ability to speak languages the person had no familiarity with, moving objects with the mind and dramatic shifts in mood that cannot be explained by purely psychological reasons. Barrajon continued that exorcists often join forces with psychologists and doctors to consider all possible contingencies on a case by case basis.

On the reality of Satan

Barrajon commented that exorcists are needed more so than ever before, as many people no longer believe in the Devil, but continue to participate in witchcraft, voo doo and other forms of black magic.

"Living in a very secularized society where more than in the past there is a tendency to open the door to occultism and esotericism, diabolical action is favored by magical practices and recourse to fortune tellers, which may have a real influence on diabolical possession," he said.

Despite the waning belief in the Devil, exorcisms have been making a comeback in recent memory. For instance, the South African murderer Aljar Swartz, who was convicted this month for decapitating a teenager and selling his body parts, said that his actions were fueled by demonic forces, and requested the judge make him undergo an exorcism as part of his sentence.

Furthermore, in 2004, Pope John II mandated that every Catholic Church should appoint an exorcist. This led to the creation of the Catholic International Association of Exorcists a decade later.

More recently, Pope Francis has attested to the reality of the Devil, praising exorcists and their efforts to cast out demons.

Sources include:

Breitbart

Breitbart

TheSun

Science.NaturalNews.com

Filed Under: Crime, Paranormal, Psychic ability, Religion, spirituality, Uncategorized Tagged With: Catholic church, demonic possessions, exorcisms, Satan

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A secret wartime deal drawn up a century ago still shapes the Middle East today

msn.com



© The National Archives, UK.

A secret wartime deal drawn up a century ago by two men — one British, one French — continues to reverberate through modern conflicts.

Named after the men who came up with it, the Sykes-Picot agreement divided up the Middle East between France and Britain. Sir Mark Sykes was appointed by the British government and François Georges-Picot by the French.

According to Robin Wright, who has written about this for The New

Yorker, Sykes famously explained in 1915 that "I should like to draw a line from the 'E' in Acre [in what is now Israel] to the last 'K' in Kirkuk [in Iraq]."

So the lines were drawn without much consideration for local identities and political preferences. At the time, the world was in the middle of World War I, and it was clear that the Ottoman Empire was about to collapse.

"Both the British and the French wanted to make sure that they created spheres of influence in which they could play a role in the modern Middle East and creating its future," explains Wright.

Wright points out, however, that Sykes' and Picot's map is not the Middle East we see today. Rather, it was the beginning of a process in defining what the region looked like that played out over years.

Eventually, the countries within the region became independent, leading to a tremendous period of instability.

"Between 1949 and 1970 there were 20 coups in Syria," Wright says. "Iraq was in many ways almost as unstable with a series of coups that ultimately brought Saddam Hussein to power."

Sykes and Picot are often blamed for the many tragic events that followed their agreement, but Wright believes that is unfair. She says the problems the region grapples with didn't just come from the arbitrary creation of borders; these countries have also suffered from government repression.

"These were not countries in which civil society was allowed to bloom, [in which] diverse political parties were nurtured," she says.

In other words: The region had problems long before the Sykes-Picot agreement, and will continue to wrestle with problems for years ahead.

Seeking to understand what Middle Easterners would have liked the region to look like, in 2013 Wright spent a year speaking with people there. She asked them what *their* map of the Middle East would look like today.

"It was fascinating how people in the region, in looking at their future, deciding for themselves, carved out 14 different nations from the five that exist today," she says.

Identity politics, she says, are even more vibrant today than a century ago.

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Was this hymn printed on Mummy Paper?

strangerremains.com

By strangerremains on May 5, 2016 • (1)



Hymn for the bi-centennial anniversary of the settlement of Norwich, CT on paper made by the Chelsea Manufacturing Company in 1859. From the Collection of the Brown University Library.

The people of Norwich, CT celebrated the bi-centennial anniversary of their city's settlement September 7th and 8th in 1859. To mark the occasion, the publishers of the local newspapers printed a hymn on brown paper to be sung during the festivities. The paper, measuring 25cm by 16cm, is unremarkable except for a statement at the bottom of the page that states that it was printed on paper produced from the linen wrappings of mummies.

"The largest paper manufacturer in the world. The material of which it is made, was brought from Egypt. It was taken from the ancient tombs where it had been used in embalming mummies. A part of the process of manufacturing is exhibited

in the procession. The daily production of the Company's mills is about 14,000 pounds."

The hymn for the bi-centennial anniversary of the settlement of Norwich is one of the few existing pieces of mummy paper. Dr. Isaiah Deck, a hobby archaeologist and explorer, introduced the idea of mummy paper in 1855 in an article titled "On a Supply of Paper Material from the Mummy Pits of Egypt" in which he proposed mummy linen as an alternate source of rags. Deck claimed that during a trip to Egypt he saw mummies and mummy parts buried in the desert and calculated that there were millions and millions of yards of linen rags just waiting to be harvested from tombs and burial pits and that this would supply the American paper industry for years. But it's not clear if this was satire or if Deck was serious.



Wooden container containing mumia, the powdered remains of Egyptian mummies. Photo from Wikipedia.

Considering that Westerners had been grinding up Egyptian mummies for medicine, known as *mumia*, and paint, known as mummy brown, it wouldn't be hard to believe that Americans would turn mummy wrappings into paper. Not to mention that in the early 19th century museums and wealthy people unwrapped mummies for entertainment at unrolling parties.

From the 14th to the end of the 19th century cotton was one of the main fibers used in paper production. Known as cotton or rag paper, mills used fiber crops, like flax and cotton, as well as rags to produce it. But rag paper required a lot of cotton for production. According to an 1855 issue of the *Annual of Scientific Discovery: Or, Yearbook of Facts in Sciences and Art*, 1½ pounds of rags was required to make one pound of paper. It was calculated that the 750 paper mills in the U.S. in the mid-1800's needed 405,000,000 pounds of rags annually, approximately the same out as France and England combined.

Mills experienced shortages regularly due to the large quantity of cotton needed to manufacture paper. Mill owners purchased cotton scraps from scavengers, known as rag-pickers, and imported discarded cotton scraps from Europe. When the shortages worsened in the mid-1800's, paper manufacturers had to import discarded cotton clothing and rags from Egypt.

But there is some dispute among scholars about whether or not paper mills went so far as to use ancient mummy linen in paper production. Those that believe mummy paper was manufactured cite newspaper reports and stories from paper mill workers as evidence.

In 1858, a correspondent from the *Journal of Commerce*, who visited a paper mill in Gardiner, ME shortly after a rag shipment from Egypt, claimed to have witnessed mummy wrappings mixed in with discards clothes and rags.

"Yesterday I visited, in company with Mayor Woods (of Gardiner,) the two principal paper factories, and I was astonished in looking at the millions of pounds of rags piled up in warehouses or spread over acres of ground to find that a portion of them had recently arrived from Alexandria in Egypt. They were the most disagreeable odiferous old clothes that I have ever had the fortune to smell. This, doubtless, was owing to the fact that a part of them were in a damaged state. The Egyptian rags has been collected from all corners of the Pacha's dominions – from the living and the dead. How many cast off garments of Howadjis and Hadjis; how many tons of big, loose, Turkish ragged breeches; and how many headpieces in the shape of old doffed turbans, the deponent sayeth not. But the most singular and the cleanest division of the whole filthy mass came not from the limbs of the present generation of travelers-pilgrims, peasants, soldiers and sailors of Egypt-but were the plundered wrappings of men, bulls, crocodiles and cats, torn from the respectable defunct members of the same...Mummy clothes as well as old rags of Italy...are ground up and come forth mingled in fond embrace and in the purest white."



19th century illustration of Gaston Maspero unwrapping a mummy in Cairo, 1886. Image from Wikipedia.

There are also stories told by relatives of paper mill workers about the making of mummy paper. William Joseph "Dard" Hunter some of these in his book *Papermaking: The History and Technique of an Ancient Craft*. One of the more detailed accounts happened at a mill owned by I. Augustus Stanwood in Gardiner, ME. Stanwood's son Daniel told Hunter that his father opened the mill in Gardiner in 1863. When his father had a hard time finding an adequate supply of rags during the Civil War he imported several shipments of mummies from Egypt just for their linen.

Some scholars, however, are skeptical about the existence of mummy paper. Joseph Dane, in *The Myth of Print Culture: Essays on Evidence, Textuality, and Bibliographical Method*, maintains that there is little evidence to confirm the production of mummy paper. He says that the accounts relating to its production, like the Stanwood story, are "vaguely documented or pure products of oral history."

It's also difficult to find other publications, aside from the Norwich celebratory hymn, that are printed on mummy paper. One of the few other examples is an issue of the *Syracuse Daily Standard* printed on July 31, 1856. According to Nevart Apikian in 'Mummy Paper Caused a Stir (1974),' the City Item section of the issue in question proclaimed:

"Our daily is now printed on paper made from rags imported directly from the land of the Pharaohs on the banks of the Nile. They were imported by George W. Ryan, veteran paper manufacturer from Marcellus Falls in this county; and he thinks they are quite as good as the general run of English and French rags."

Plus there is no empirical evidence to substantiate that mummy paper was ever produced. In the *American Antiquarian*, S.J. Wolfe writes that chemical and microscopic analysis would show only that the paper came from cotton or linen. Also carbon-14 dating would likely be inconclusive because the linen from mummies would have been mixed in with rags from other sources in the mill beaters. Despite Daniel Stanwood's account of multiple shipments of mummies that were sent to his father's mill from Egypt, Wolfe was not able to find any existing ship or paper mill records that indicated any such cargo was ever transported.

So was the hymn for the Norwich bi-centennial anniversary printed on 'mummy paper'?

As Wolfe points out, there is no way to know for sure. It's certainly possible that the Chelsea Manufacturing Company imported rags and discarded clothes from Egypt, like the Gardiner mill in 1858, and that mummy wrappings were jumbled in with a larger shipment of clothes and other rags from the region.

Cotton shortages were only a problem until the second half of the 19th century when mills started using wood pulp in the paper-making process. Today linen or rag based paper is used primarily in printing currency and high-end paper.



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Was Victorian life really so grim?

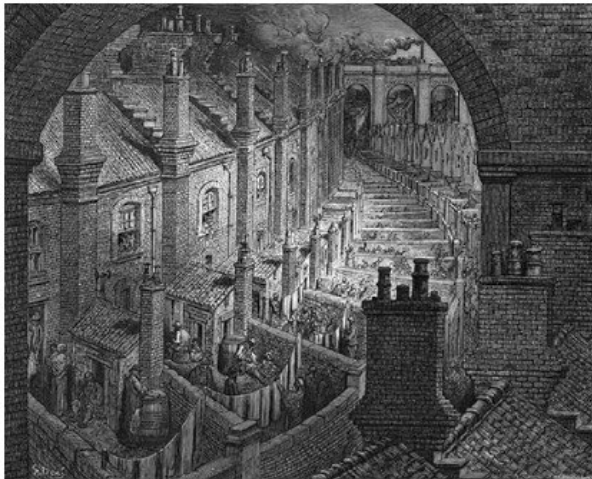
Wednesday 25th November 2015

historyextra.com



Rosalind Crone reveals surprising truths about the experiences of the urban poor in 19th-century Britain...

This article was first published in the Christmas 2015 issue of BBC History Magazine



Gustave Doré's famous engraving, produced to illustrate the 1872 book *London: A Pilgrimage*, depicts (and exaggerates) the squalor of tightly packed terraced houses. Yet, as Rosalind Crone observes, the washing lines in Doré's picture demonstrate that "slum-dwellers were not all very dirty – or, at least, they didn't choose to be". © Getty

The most familiar images of Victorian life are bleak indeed: impoverished children working long hours in factories and mines; blankets of smog suspended above overcrowded cities; frightening workhouses run by cruel governors; violent criminals lurking in the shadows. In black-and-white photos of the period, people both high and low-born are invariably unsmiling – a miserable bunch, surely?

There is some truth in this portrayal. The twin processes of industrialisation and urbanisation did force a drop in living standards for some, and the turbulent decade after Queen Victoria came to the throne became known as the 'Hungry Forties'. These years were punctuated by economic depression leading to social unrest, popular protests and growing fears of revolution.

Such impressions can be explained by the collision of three unique processes. The first, combining industrialisation and urbanisation, had acutely visual effects. Just as important was the expansion of print culture, which provided a vehicle for such images as well as a growing and captivated audience. The third ingredient, equally crucial, was the emergence of a reforming spirit among the social elite from the 1830s onwards. Grave images of deprivation were circulated precisely because reformers such as Dickens, Disraeli and Gaskell, plus journalists and MPs, wanted to remedy such social problems.

But was life truly miserable? Did the labouring poor believe they were living in exceptionally tough times? Social historians have worked hard to give voice to those at the bottom, uncovering new evidence and taking a fresh look at old material related to five aspects of life. In doing so, they have challenged the very grimmest portrayals of urban Victorian Britain...

1) Were the mills really dark and satanic?

Workers toiled in dangerous factories or mines – but conditions improved substantially. The mention of work in the Victorian period rarely fails to conjure up an image of an imposing factory or a bleak mine, run by a merciless employer, in which employees – including small

children – are forced to work long hours, often in poor light, using dangerous machinery. It is a picture created by novels such as Dickens' *Hard Times*; by government inquiries, such as Ashley's Mines

Commission of 1842, which exposed brutal physical and moral conditions; and by scandals about real factories throughout the century. But is it accurate? Not entirely.

Industrialisation in the early 19th century did drive down wages and lead to an increase in the employment of women and children, especially those of a very young age, in the manufacturing sector. Work in factories and mines certainly could be dangerous. In 1879, one MP who had visited a Bradford textile factory in the late 1830s described the 80 crippled and deformed children gathered for his inspection in the courtyard: "No power of language could describe the varieties, and I may say the cruelties, in these degradations of the human form. They stood or squatted before me in all the shapes of the letters of the alphabet."

However, from the 1830s onwards, legislation was introduced to restrict child and (in some cases) female labour, to improve conditions and to regulate working hours. Reforms were limited, but often by the realities of working-class life. Take child labour, for example. While it offends our 21st-century sensibilities, it was not necessarily socially detrimental – after all, the wages that children brought in could raise the standard of living for the entire family. The alternative – schooling – cost money and rarely bettered a child's future prospects.

What's more, working in a factory could be preferable to other types of paid work. Days were controlled by the clock, but they were not necessarily longer than those of agricultural labourers. Clocking in and out, combined with the physical separation of work and home, could be more attractive than the endless days of domestic servants – another expanding industry. For every merciless master there existed at least one paternalistic employer who cared about his workers. Some even created model villages near workplaces for families to live in some comfort, one of the most famous being the Cadbury's Bournville establishment near Birmingham.

Not only did some workers enjoy protection for traditional holidays (raucous St Monday festivities continued as late as the 1870s in the West Midlands) but time for leisure increased: the working day was limited to 10 hours, and the Saturday half-day was introduced. Many employers organised trips for their workforces to the seaside.

Even employees without these privileges were increasingly able to enjoy an expanding world of leisure, as workers' real wages increased from the middle of the century. At the same time, industrial unrest and popular narratives of factory accidents subsided because the majority of working people became more comfortable with new patterns of work and industrial capitalism.

Young children carry heavy loads in a Midlands brickyard in this 1871 illustration from The Graphic, a weekly London newspaper. It has been estimated that between 20,000 and 30,000 children aged under 16 worked in British brickyards at that time. © Getty

2) A route out of poverty



Young children carry heavy loads in a Midlands brickyard in this 1871 illustration from *The Graphic*, a weekly London newspaper. It has been estimated that between 20,000 and 30,000 children aged under 16 worked in British brickyards at that time © Getty

Not all paupers were condemned to hellish workhouses. One of the most enduring images of the Victorian period is entirely fictional: the painfully hungry *Oliver Twist* begging the tyrannical workhouse beadle, Mr Bumble, for gruel. Charles Dickens wrote his novel in the wake of the New Poor Law of 1834, legislation that aimed to reduce government spending on welfare by deterring the poor from seeking assistance. Local relieving officers were tasked to send those in need to the workhouse, where families were split up. Those who could work were pressed into hard labour and those who couldn't were cared for at the minimum

standard. All were subjected to a harsh disciplinary regime.

Some workhouses were abhorrent institutions. Local penal authorities were convinced that paupers deliberately tore their uniforms or smashed windows in order to be sent to prison – where both accommodation and food were better.

The workhouse also held a special attraction to journalists eager for explosive copy. In 1866, James Greenwood disguised himself as a vagrant to spend a night in the male 'casual ward' of the Lambeth Workhouse. After being registered, he was forced to bathe in a "liquid so disgustingly like weak mutton broth" and allocated a shirt and rug, then entered the ward to find "30 men and boys stretched upon shallow pallets which put only 6 inches of comfortable hay between them and the stony floor. These beds were placed close together... In not a few cases two gentlemen had clubbed beds and rugs and slept together."

But how helpful are such portraits in understanding the experience of poverty in Victorian Britain? They certainly have their limits. Written between 1837 and 1839, *Oliver Twist* could at best describe conditions only in pre-Victorian poorhouses, and the New Poor Law was in practice not nearly as harsh as its promise – probably why campaigns against it died away fairly quickly.

It's also worth acknowledging that workhouses functioned as providers of services ranging from education to health care, particularly from the mid-1860s onwards when improvements in provision were made.

What's more, poverty was not a permanent state but often a condition that working people, or even lower middle-class people, could slip into and out of, depending on circumstances. And the poor had multiple resources upon which to draw. First was charity, which many socially conscious and religiously motivated elites were only too eager to supply. And the poor were not docile recipients of this charity. They knew just how to play the role required to secure funds – combining a display of respectability with evidence of poverty.

Secondary survival strategies ranged from gleaning (gathering leftover grain after harvest),

keeping livestock, co-residence and pawning, to less legitimate activities – poaching, petty crime, prostitution and fraud. The poor routinely pawned their Sunday clothes early in the week to put food on the table, and redeemed them on Saturdays after wages had been collected. A London pawnshop assistant described the merriment of the trade on Saturday evening: “Some was eating fish and chips, some was eating tangerines, some had pease pudding and faggots. Cor blimey it was like Mother Kelly’s doorstep in there.”



George Cruikshank's illustration of Oliver Twist begging for more gruel typifies perceptions of workhouses – yet such conditions were more common in pre-Victorian establishments © Bridgeman

George Cruikshank's illustration of Oliver Twist begging for more gruel typifies perceptions of workhouses – yet such conditions were more common in pre-Victorian establishments. © Bridgeman

3) The war on dirt

Urbanisation and industrialisation worsened living conditions for town dwellers. New industries pumped pollutants into the air and water. Expanding populations increased pressure on existing sewerage. Overcrowded neighbourhoods deteriorated into slums. The most notorious – St Giles, Old Nichol and Jacob's Island in London, Angel Meadow in Manchester – were immortalised by artists, journalists and novelists, and some even featured in Baedeker's famous travel guides.

The need to address such problems was recognised at the start of the Victorian period. To the investigations of reformer Edwin Chadwick must be added protestations from residents of ground-floor and cellar apartments inundated by sewerage overflows during heavy rain. Those living beside urban burial grounds witnessed daily the turning out of recently interred bodies to accommodate the stream of fresh corpses, as described by Thomas Munns in 1842: “I saw them bring up intestines in a bucket and put them out on the earth, and bones were thrown up, which were put in a barrow and wheeled away.”

Improvements came quickly. From the 1840s, new drain systems and other ambitious projects started to remove waste and clean up water supplies. Scavengers removed filth from the streets. New laws imposed regulations on construction of dwellings to combat the growth of slums. Some towns built public conveniences; by 1875, Glasgow had 198 urinals.

Notably, 80 to 90 per cent of the population did not reside in slums, and many working-class families, especially in the later Victorian period, did not live in overcrowded conditions. And what seriously needs reassessing is the assumption of dirt. By contemporary standards, slum-dwellers were not all very dirty – or, at least, they didn't choose to be. Evidence lurks in depictions of slum life. Gustave Doré's famous etching (on page 50) shows lines of washing hanging in tenement backyards. Some even served as laundries for the well-to-do – those most offended by the slums' dirty existence.

Jacob's Island, a notorious slum 'rookery' in south London, portrayed around 1810. © Getty



Jacob's Island, a notorious slum 'rookery' in south London, portrayed around 1810 © Getty

4) When crime paid

Newspapers made a mint out of exaggerating the threat posed by 'the criminal class'. Though the Victorian age has come to be remembered as criminal and violent, most of the best-known vicious anti-heroes of the 19th century are fictional or semi-fictional – for example, Fagin and Jack the Ripper.

Our perceptions have been largely driven by the Victorians' own fears and claims of a large, hardened, uncivilised and largely irretrievable criminal class in

towns and cities. The famous early Victorian social investigators Henry Mayhew and John Binny boasted that they had managed to assemble 150 of these creatures in a room, the effect a "spectacle of squalor, rags and wretchedness... Some were young men, and some were children... [many] had the deep-sunk and half-averted eye... so characteristic of natural dishonesty and cunning... The hair of most of the lads was cut very close to the head, showing their recent liberation from prison."

The popularisation of phrenology (a pseudoscience primarily focused on measurements of the human skull – see our feature on page 47) gave the idea of the 'criminal class' a scientific authority. The arrival of crime statistics in 1857 brought accurate estimates of the dimensions of this class (20,000 members in London alone, according to journalist James Greenwood in 1869), and the introduction of criminal registers with photographs enabled the monitoring of every individual.

Historians have worked hard to explode this myth: there were probably no more than about 4,000 truly 'habitual criminals', and most theft and violence was opportunistic and carried out by poor, young men.

Contemporary fears about crime and violence were further inflamed by an expanding and increasingly pictorial newspaper press. Crime news was readily available and sold well. Detailed coverage of a particularly gruesome murder could increase circulation several fold; the proprietors of several national and London newspapers made small fortunes from coverage of the 'Jack the Ripper' murders.

With its thirst for crime, the media also manufactured moral panics by compiling reports over several weeks to suggest that a crime wave had hit a local area. The most famous of these was the London garrotting panic of the early 1860s, sparked when several London newspapers published a wave of reports on violent street robberies. In fact, according to the criminal statistics, there was no significant increase in robberies. However, popular fears forced the government to take action, increasing penalties for offenders and granting police new powers of surveillance over known criminals.

Victorian statistics also tell us that crime – or at least serious theft and violence – was in decline through the second half of the 19th century. They are supported by other evidence, notably the emergence of a disciplined, efficient police force accepted – if not always liked – by almost every level of society. At the same time, society was becoming less violent. Male-on-male violence almost certainly declined as displays of aggression were increasingly regarded as unacceptable. But that didn't stop many Victorians believing they were living through a crime-ravaged age. As one committed working-class newspaper reader declared to Henry Mayhew: "I read Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper on a Sunday, and what murders and robberies there is now!"

Perceptions are important in assessments of quality of life, but so too is lived experience. Victorians were predominantly spectators rather than victims of crime. And spectating – when violence was presented in neatly packaged, entertaining forms – could be an enjoyable pastime.



The front page of the 22 September 1888 edition of *The Illustrated Police News* reports the murder of Annie Chapman, second victim of the killer dubbed Jack the Ripper. Such lurid accounts of crimes boosted newspaper circulations enormously. © Alamy

*The front page of the 22 September 1888 edition of **The Illustrated Police News** reports the murder of Annie Chapman, second victim of the killer dubbed Jack the Ripper. Such lurid accounts of crimes boosted newspaper circulations enormously. © Alamy*

5) A nation rises from its sickbed

The Victorians, especially poor ones, were at high risk of catching some nasty diseases. Most of the common killers – measles, scarlet fever, smallpox and typhus – had blighted Britain for centuries. Yet overcrowded and unsanitary conditions created by rapid urbanisation did assist the spread of these infectious diseases, as well as various illnesses of the digestive system such as diarrhoea and gastroenteritis.

What's more, life expectancy, which had previously shown long-term improvement, took a tumble in the second quarter of the 19th century. By the start of Queen Victoria's reign, it had fallen to around 25–27 years in the industrial towns of Manchester, Liverpool and Glasgow. As the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure calculates, life expectancy in urban slums of the 1830s and 1840s was the lowest it had been since the Black Death.

The primary reason was the high rate of child mortality. Around one-third of children, and more than half in some poor neighbourhoods, died before they reached the age of five. High child mortality was a factor driving increased numbers of offspring. However, as the letters, diaries and memoirs of men and women from all levels of society show, having more children never compensated emotionally for those who were lost.

As grim as these mortality statistics appear, overall the Victorian period was an era of improvement in terms of health. Life expectancy increased from around 1870 onwards, largely due to the fact that the Victorians became better at fighting diseases. Sanitary reform helped, because stagnant dirty water was flushed away. Doctors and scientists began to

develop a better understanding of the causes of diseases.

Though cholera killed more than 50,000 people in Britain during the 1848–49 epidemic, the death toll fell to around 14,000 in the last epidemic of 1866, after John Snow successfully demonstrated that the disease was transmitted via contaminated water. Infectious diseases were responsible for around 40 per cent of urban deaths in 1840, but this figure dropped to about 20 per cent by 1900. The moment at which the prevalence of degenerative disease overtook that of infectious disease came during the Victorian era.

Alongside better hygiene, improved nutrition also helped combat disease, which might sound unlikely in light of a commonly told story of the period – the numbers of short men with bad teeth and poor eyesight, enlisting for service in the Boer Wars at the end of the century, who triggered a government inquiry.

Then there were tales of food adulteration – the use of chalk or alum in white bread, plaster of Paris in boiled sweets, horsemeat in sausages – encouraged by an unregulated industry under pressure to sell ready-made food at cheap prices. However, from 1860, new legislation on food standards combated the worst abuses. And anyway, having developed a taste for many ‘rogue’ products, the working classes were largely indifferent about most low-level adulteration.

Recent research suggests that Britons of the mid-Victorian period enjoyed a diet rich in fruit, whole grains, oily fish and vegetables – superior to ours today, in fact. Nutritional problems came in the form of tinned foods and cheap sugar imported during the late 19th century – detrimental in the long term but, in the short term, sources of delight rather than misery.

9 astonishing deaths reported in Victorian newspapers

Why do the Victorians always look so miserable in photographs?

Life in a London slum and the Last Judgement

Who was Jack the Ripper?

The scandal of female miners in 19th-century Britain

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The PUBLIC DOMAIN REVIEW

A project of the Open Knowledge Foundation

Keen to appear outward-looking and open to Western culture, in 1838 the Second King of Siam bestowed upon his son a most unusual name. Ross Bullen explores the curious case of “Prince George Washington”, a 19th-century Siamese prince.



Photograph of Prince Wichaichan, AKA “Prince George Washington”, date unknown — Source .

In October of 1856, readers of the *New York Daily Times* were eager for news from Siam. In the 1850s, most Americans would only be familiar with the Southeast Asian nation now known as Thailand through its most famous citizens, Chang and Eng Bunker, the original “Siamese twins,” who had been living in the U.S. since 1830. But the Kingdom of Siam itself – its geography, its government, its culture – was a total mystery. However, a new treaty between Siam and the United States, negotiated in 1856 by Townsend Harris, the first U.S. Consul General in Japan, kindled a public interest in all things Siamese. In an article titled “From Siam,” the *Times*’ correspondent does not hesitate to dampen the public’s enthusiasm. “The importance of a commercial treaty with such a people has been and will be overrated in the United States”, he writes. “The present prospects of Siam are not flattering”. Seemingly without any sense of irony, the author of “From Siam” criticizes the widespread practice of slavery in Siam, and states his belief that “The kingdom is in a state of unrest... which may end in a civil war”.

If the *Times*’ correspondent failed to see the shared potential for civil unrest in both his own country and Siam, other points of comparison between Siam and the U.S. were harder to ignore. The author reports that

we had a Siamese Prince to visit our ship a short time since, who went by the proud name of ‘Prince GEORGE WASHINGTON.’ During George’s rambles around the ship, if any of his inferior subjects came in his way, they would sprawl themselves out instanter far down and wriggle themselves out of the way like a worm.

A Siamese prince, demanding that his “inferior subjects” prostrate themselves before him, and adopting the name of the United States’ first President, was too odd a figure to ignore; indeed, descriptions of Prince George Washington would become a regular feature of American writing about Siam from the mid-1850s to the turn of the century. But who was this unusually named prince? And what did the Americans who wrote and read about him think he could teach them about Siam? Or about America?



Photograph of the Front Palace (Wang Na), the residence of the Second King of Siam ca. 1890, now the Bangkok National Museum – Source

Prince George Washington was really Prince Wichaichan, the son of the Second King of Siam. The institution of the “Second King” was another common point of confusion for American and European visitors to Siam. The *Times*’ correspondent attempts to explain the position to his readers using an American political vocabulary: “The second King is a King only in name, being subservient to the first King in all things, and during the life of the first King he is a mere cipher in state affairs, except in his absence, when he holds the reins of government,

being a kind of Vice-President.” Perhaps needless to say, the job of the Second King actually had very little in common with the Vice Presidency of the United States. When he came to power in 1851, King Mongkut created the role in order to appease his powerful younger brother, Pinklao. Although the position was largely symbolic, the title would have enhanced Pinklao’s claim to the throne in the event that he outlived Mongkut (he didn’t). Later in his life, Wichaichan would serve as Second King to Mongkut’s son Chulalongkorn. So although Wichaichan was an important political figure in Siam, he was also always kept at a firm remove from a real position of power. He would often meet with visiting U.S. dignitaries, who could not help noting – implicitly and explicitly – the contrast between the nickname “George Washington”, which was synonymous with U.S. political power, and Wichaichan’s seemingly neutered political ambitions.

Wichaichan’s unusual nickname was the result of his father’s commitment to “modernize” Siam by studying and deliberately emulating Western culture. This “Siamese Occidentalism”, as the Thai anthropologist Pattana Kitiarsa explains it, “is not simply a reversal of Western Orientalist logics and power/knowledge relations. It is the historically and culturally rooted system of epistemological tactics employed by Siam’s rulers and intellectual elites to turn the Otherness of *farang* [white foreigners] into ambiguous objects of those elites’ desires to be modern and civilized.”¹ Prince George Washington was one such “ambiguous object”, bearing both the name of a U.S. President and a royal title that was wholly incompatible with the American political system. By naming his son Prince George Washington (in addition to his many other royal names and titles), Pinklao wished to communicate that he was a progressive person who was drawn to modern American culture, while never abandoning his fundamental commitment to Siam’s absolute monarchy.

Pinklao’s self-fashioned hybridity was picked up on by visiting American writers, who almost always preferred him to the more conservative and conventional King Mongkut. For example, in his 1873 travelogue *Siam, the Land of the White Elephant, as It Was and Is*, George B. Bacon recalls a meeting with Pinklao in the year 1857. “It was hard to believe that I was in a remote and almost unknown corner of the old world, and not in the new”, Bacon writes of his visit with the Second King, since “the conversation was such as might take place between

two gentlemen in a New York parlor.” For Bacon, even Pinklao’s clothing becomes a metaphor for the Second King’s Siamese-American hybridity and the transformation Siam itself will undergo as a result of its increased contact with the West. “Half European, half Oriental in his dress, he had combined the two styles with more good taste than one could have expected”, Bacon writes. “It was characteristic of that transition from barbarism to civilization, upon which his kingdom is just entering”.



Depiction of Pinklao, the Second King of Siam (1851 to 1866), featured in Henri Mouhot's *Voyage dans les royaumes de Siam, de Cambodge, de Laos* (1868) — Source .

If an American writer like Bacon could view Pinklao’s clothing as a metaphor for Siam’s social transformation, then the Second King’s son, Prince George Washington, was an even more potent political symbol. There is some disagreement about whether Pinklao named Wichaichan “George Washington” himself, or if it was the work of a patriotic American missionary. In *The English Governess at the Siamese Court*, Anna Leonowens claims that “an American missionary, who was on terms of intimacy with the father, named the child ‘George Washington’”, and in an obituary for Wichaichan printed in the *Baptist Missionary Magazine*, author and missionary Fannie Roper Feudge claims that she “had the honor of *naming* the royal babe... and as the father had requested that the name selected should combine that of an English king and an American president, ‘George Washington’ was chosen”. It is unlikely that Wichaichan would have been given this nickname without his father’s explicit approval, but it is possible that Feudge or another American missionary may have suggested Washington as a suitable name for the young Siamese prince. If this is the case it would be consistent with how American

writers in the nineteenth century used the iconic image of George Washington to think about the United States’ increasing contact with exotic and distant lands and peoples. Because he was such a definitive and recognizable symbol of the United States itself, Washington was the perfect figure for expressing concern over what might happen to the American character if it came into contact with a foreign “other”.

Early in Herman Melville’s 1851 novel *Moby-Dick*, Ishmael struggles to reconcile his conflicted feelings for the South Seas harpooner Queequeg. At first Ishmael is worried that Queequeg is a cannibal who will murder him in his sleep, but after they share a bed for the night, Queequeg declares that he and Ishmael are “married... meaning, in his country’s phrase, that [they] were bosom friends”. Queequeg’s otherness is offset by his sudden and profound intimacy with Ishmael – the cannibal from Kokovoko is now part of Ishmael’s American family. Fascinated by his new friend, Ishmael offers the following odd description of Queequeg:

With much interest I sat watching him. Savage though he was, and hideously marred about the face – at least to my taste – his countenance yet had a something in it which was by no means disagreeable. You cannot hide the soul. Through all his unearthly tattooings, I thought I saw the traces of a simple honest heart; and in his large, deep eyes, fiery black and bold, there seemed tokens of a spirit that would dare a thousand devils. And besides all this, there was a certain

lofty bearing about the Pagan, which even his uncouthness could not altogether maim. He looked like a man who had never cringed and never had had a creditor. Whether it was, too, that his head being shaved, his forehead was drawn out in freer and brighter relief, and looked more expansive than it otherwise would, this I will not venture to decide; but certain it was his head was phrenologically an excellent one. It may seem ridiculous, but it reminded me of General Washington's head, as seen in the popular busts of him. It had the same long regularly graded retreating slope from above the brows, which were likewise very projecting, like two long promontories thickly wooded on top. Queequeg was George Washington cannibalistically developed.

Ishmael was not alone in his phrenological fascination with George Washington. In Orson Squire Fowler's *The Practical Phrenologist*, Washington is presented as an example of the "well-balanced temperament," which is "by far the best" skull type Fowler identifies. Queequeg may be "cannibalistically developed", but his Washington-like phrenological features suggest that he is nevertheless an honest and respectable person. This interest in the features of the original George Washington's skull can be detected in descriptions of Prince George Washington as well. In Feudge's obituary for Wichaichan, she notes that "in person, 'King George Washington' was of tall, compact figure, indicative alike of strength and beauty; of full, pleasing face, and well-formed head".



Phrenology diagram of (the real) George Washington's head, featured in Fowler's *The Practical Phrenologist* (1846) — Source .

Racialized George Washingtons were a recurrent trope in nineteenth-century American writing, including in texts set in the United States itself. In Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, we are told that "the wall over the fireplace" of Tom's slave cabin "was adorned with some very brilliant scriptural prints, and a portrait of General Washington, drawn and colored in a manner which would certainly have astonished that hero, if ever he happened to meet with its like". This portrait of a black George Washington had a real-life analogue in Hawaii, at least according to Mark Twain in an 1866 letter written during a visit to the islands (which were not yet part of the U.S.). "We were next introduced to General George Washington," Twain writes, "or, at least, to an aged, limping Negro man, who called himself by that honored name." After going on to tell us that this man is kept in chains in a Hawaiian prison, Twain drily notes, "I do not think he is

the old original General W."

For literary critic Amy Kaplan, Twain's black General George Washington and Melville's cannibalistic George Washington both serve to "acknowledge and ridicule the desire for independence by non-white peoples".² Washington's image, associated with the Revolutionary War and American liberty, is attenuated by his black skin or tattoos, creating a juxtaposition that would be amusing to white nineteenth-century readers who were sceptical that the freedoms Washington stood for could be extended to non-white persons as well. A similar dynamic is at work in descriptions of Prince George Washington, as American writers



George Cruikshank illustration, slightly cropped, for Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Visible over the fireplace is "a portrait of General Washington, drawn and colored in a manner which would certainly have astonished that hero, if ever he happened to meet with its like" – Source

wanted to acknowledge and approve of attempts by Siamese elites like Pinklao, Wichaichan, and Chulalongkorn to "modernize" Siam by becoming more American, while also maintaining a strict distinction between the non-white Siamese and white Americans.

In his recollection of his visit with Pinklao in 1857, George B. Bacon also shares his impressions of Wichaichan. Bacon is pleased with the physical appearance of the "tall, manly, handsome youth" when he meets him, but is even more taken aback by his unusual name:

He has a kingly name – a more than kingly name. For the second king, seeking a significant name for his son, chose one which had been borne, not by an Asiatic, not by a European, but by the greatest of Americans – George Washington. 'What's in a name?' It may provoke a smile at first, that such a use should be made of the name Washington, as if it were the whim of an ignorant and half-savage king. But when it shall appear, as I shall make it appear before I have finished, that this Siamese king understood and appreciated the great character of the man after whom he wished his son to be called, I think that no American will be content with laughing at him. I own that it moved me with something more than merely patriotic pride to hear the name of Washington honored in the remotest corner of the old world.

Bacon's optimism is qualified, however, when he and Prince George Washington walk together toward the Second King's palace. "I suddenly missed the young man from my side, and turned to look for him," Bacon writes.

What change had come over him! The man had been transformed into a reptile. The tall and graceful youth, princely in look and bearing, was down on all his marrow-bones, bending his head until it almost touched the pavement of the portico, and, crawling slowly toward the door, conducted me with reverent signs and whispers toward the king, his father, whom I saw coming to meet us.

For Bacon this contrast between the handsome, modern Prince named after "the greatest of Americans" and the absolute obeisance demanded by the Siamese monarchy is "characteristic of the strange conflict between the old barbarism and the new enlightenment which one meets at every turn" in Siam. Like the racialized George Washingtons described by Melville, Stowe, and Twain, this George Washington stops short of attaining the grandeur of his American namesake. This point is brought home for Bacon during his lunch with the Second King, as he imagines that "the portrait of the real George Washington on the wall" of Pinklao's palace would "blush with shame and indignation" if "it looked down on the reptile attitude of his namesake." Although the Washington portrait is merely a representation of the real George Washington, it is seemingly a more faithful copy of the original than the Siamese

prince lying prostrate on his father's floor.

Although Wichaichan would succeed his father as Second King, his political career did not have a happy ending. In 1875, when his cousin First King Chulalongkorn tried to introduce progressive reforms to the Siamese political system, the conservative Wichaichan attempted to seize power. When this failed, he sought shelter with the British Consulate, eventually negotiating a truce with Chulalongkorn that allowed him to return to his palace, but with a reduced personal guard and limited political influence.



Photograph of Prince Wichaichan on his throne in the Front Palace – Source .

Unlike General Washington, Prince George Washington had failed to lead a political revolution. Descriptions of Wichaichan following the “Front Palace Crisis” typically represent him as a somewhat sad, frustrated old man (even though he was only in his early 40s). A striking example can be found in John Russell Young’s *Around the World with General Grant*, a travelogue that recounts Ulysses S. Grant’s world tour following his second term as President of the United States. Like George Washington, Grant was a President who earned his political capital through his storied military career. And so, in a very odd way, the meeting between Ulysses S. Grant and Prince George Washington was an anachronistic encounter between two of America’s most celebrated heroes. And yet, of course, the contrast between Prince George Washington and the real General Washington was too great for Grant – and Young, his biographer – to ignore. Young describes he and Grant waiting for Wichaichan in his palace, which to their eyes “bore an aspect of decay”. “In a few moments his Majesty appeared and gave us a cordial greeting”, Young writes.

An illness in his limbs gives him a slow, shuffling gait, and he told us he had not been in the upper story of his palace for a year. We sat under the canopy and talked about only America and Siam. No allusion was made to any political question, the King saying that he gave most of his time to science and study. Having a nominal authority in the State he has time enough for the most abstruse calculations.

Deprived of any real power, Prince George Washington – now King George Washington – lives in a dilapidated palace and pursues harmless intellectual pursuits instead of the political duties that his royal birth and famous name should have prepared him for. “The King seemed sad and tired in his manner”, Young writes, “as if he would like really to be employed, as if he felt that when one is a king he should be at more stable occupations than turning ivory boxes on a wheel, or mixing potter’s clay”. When the real George Washington retired to his slave plantation at Mount Vernon he was regarded as a hero in the United States and throughout the world. The contrast between Washington’s retirement, resting on the laurels of a lifetime of military and political victories, and the forced retirement of Siam’s King George Washington is palpable in Young’s description, as a former U.S. President looks with pity on a racialized and debased copy of one of America’s founding fathers.

From the first time he was noticed by the *New York Daily Times* in 1856, until his death in 1885, Wichaichan would always be interpreted through the lens of his American nickname. Being named “George Washington” suggested that he was a new kind of Siamese noble, a modern, Americanized monarch who heralded a departure from the old stereotype of the “Oriental despot”. But his – and his father’s – commitment to the conservative conventions of the Siamese monarchy, meant that Prince George Washington would always be kept at an arm’s length from his famous namesake. In his famous book *The Location of Culture*, Homi K. Bhabha describes “colonial mimicry” as a state of being “almost the same but not quite”, or more pointedly, “almost the same but not white”.³ This formulation encapsulates the attitude American writers had toward Prince George Washington, a sense of admiration and attraction offset by a deep revulsion toward cultural and racial difference. Although they were flattered to see their national hero honored in a foreign land, they believed that this living tribute could never match the original. There may have been two kings in Siam, but American history only had room for one George Washington.

Ross Bullen teaches English at OCAD University in Toronto. You can find more of his writing here, and follow him on Twitter. .

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by Amy Kaplan

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Posted on May 22, 2015 By Chad Abramovich



Logo



One thing is

The startling remains of a sawdust pile in the middle of the otherwise verdant Green Mountain National Forest is the remnants of a once expansive logging operation executed here during the late 1800s (via backcountry.net) Lake Sadawga | Google Maps A tree sporting multiple "burls"

indisputable; Vermonters have been experiencing and talking about weird phenomena for a good long time. While some of these oddities may be easier to explain or theorize, others, much to the chagrin of some, remain puzzling and controversial conundrums. I've written about a few of them here, using research and other information that has come to me over time. And I'm sure there is far more that has yet to make it into public consciousness. As to what the *truth* is, I'll leave that up to the readers.

Newark's Strange Hum

There are some people in the vicinity of the tiny kingdom town of Newark that are being bothered by a mysterious low-pitched hum, but no one seems to know where it's coming from, or what's behind it. To make matters more interesting – no one seems to have any idea exactly when it started. It first reached public attention in March 1997 when the *Caledonian Record* featured the mysterious hum in a story. But some residents speculate the hum has been around much longer, the debating ranging from months to years.

While we know almost nothing about the hum, there are a few peculiar attributes that we *do* know:

1. It occurs in places where there's no electricity, and is even active during power outages.
2. Not everyone can hear it, creating some tensions amongst the locals. Even stranger, deaf people have noticed the hum, while others with perfect hearing cannot.
3. It can't be detected by microphones or special low frequency antennas.
4. The most peculiar thing I've heard from my research, is that those who claim to have heard the noise, all describe their experience differently. Comparisons range from sounding like an electric motor running in the next room, to a deeper noise that seems to fade in and out and shuts off then turns on at random intervals.

Theories abound. The paranormal, UFOs, a government mind control device (perhaps located



A tree sporting multiple "burls"

roughly 20 feet long and 6 feet high, is poised off the ground by the significantly smaller rock that it rests on, after a glacier dropped the massive rock here during the last ice age. Others speculate a wilder theory, that the massive boulder once tumbled down from the higher slopes and impossibly came to rest in it's current precarious position. Today, the gravity defying boulder is inside the beautiful Elmore State Park, and can be accessed by a hiking trail that climbs the ridge line of Mount Elmore. Though it's safe to climb on, just be weary, you wouldn't want to unbalance balancing rock.



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Obscure Vermont

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somewhere in the hulking ruins of the abandoned radar base on East Mountain nearby). And there are others who turn to science, suggesting culprits such as cell phones, power tools and microwaves. So, what could possibly be happening here?

Reaching out to Joan Bicknell from the Newark town offices, she explained that the humming actually is still ongoing to this day, but it's nowhere near as tumultuous as it was over a decade ago. "The few people who heard it constantly say they don't hear it consistently now" Bicknell explained. "It still happens, but not constantly..." Joan led me to another source, a gentleman named Tom Lasherleslie, who is one of the people who have heard the hum for years now, but, in an archetypal act of Vermont stoicism, sort of left the matter a mystery when I had sent him an email.

While bringing this up in conversation with my friend Ethan, he recalled that he was able to hear the Newark Hum very clearly next door in his former hometown of Sutton. In the winters, him and his friends used to ride their snowmobiles to a few high meadows on his friend's property. When they arrived in the fields, they would shut off the snowmobile engines and the woods would be enveloped in a wintry silence, except for a very distinct noise that he would describe as sounding like "a giant industrial factory fan". He could never pinpoint the noise, but he heard it very pronounced not only in the mountains, but at his house back in town. He swore this had to be the Newark hum, because there was no other explanation he could muster for the strange noise.

No definite answers has been brought forth yet, making this a modern day mystery. But strange noises beneath the ground are not unusual to New England. The most notable example would be the famous Moodus Noises, located in Moodus Connecticut, and the lesser known Nashoba Hill in Littleton, Massachusetts, a strange rocky hill where shuddering roaring and rumbling booms are said to emanate from inside the hill. As a matter of fact, the name Nashoba is an Indian word, dubbed by the Praying Indians which once settled there, meaning "The Hill That Shakes". An old Indian tale tells of the four winds that were pent up in chambers that lay underneath the hill, trying to break free from their granite prison. Other theories suggest that a monster lives inside the hill, the earth acting as a barrier to keep the fearsome oddity from buffeting the town.

Underneath Border Skies; Defying Gravity in Richford.

Vermont's northern boundary is a 90 mile straight line running from the mouth of the Richelieu River at Lake Champlain to the cold waters of the Connecticut River, a line that separates us from Quebec and conjures images of a sort of an "end of the world" to us living in the states – a halt before we venture into the great north land that is known as Canada, where we are foreigners. Life metaphorically stops at this invisible line, and is forced to exist below it.



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It's not surprising that the lands underneath border skies are awash in mysterious lore and mysteries. The hardscrabble border town of Richford is one such town, with lingering tales of bootleggers and a giant bird that supposedly once terrorized the community, to name a few. My personal favorite is a tale of two buildings. The centerpieces of Richford's downtown are the two stately brick buildings that stand opposite each other across the road, at the foot of the bridge.

Pictured below is The Boright Building. Legend

has it that Mr. Boright built the building's most upper level after its construction, just so his building could be the tallest in town. As a testimony to this, you'll notice the brick work on the top is different than the rest of the building. As for his motive, whether it was just good natured competition or a grudge against a rival business partner, I'm not sure. Before the construction, the building pictured below this one was taller. Despite appearances though, it is said that the upper level is hollow, nothing was ever built inside.



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DSC_0348_pe

But I'm getting side tracked here. Somewhere along the Canadian border near East Richford, is an area of country where gravity forces work in extraordinary ways. A dirt road that weaves its way along both sides of the border is said to be the subject of interest here, and it's on this rural stretch of gravel

where cars are said to defy gravity, and roll uphill! Though this fabled place has been covered quite a bit in Vermont folklore, it still manages to intrigue. There have been a good number of alleged experiences reported, one even claiming their car rolled up hill as fast as 15 miles per hour! (reality or hoax, I'll never know).

However, my experience there in 2012 was pretty uneventful. It's called Richford's Mystery Spot for a good reason – namely because the exact spot, as is the exact road, is unknown. And asking around doesn't really help. One amused cashier at a local gas station may hold the key to my disappointment however. He asked what car I was driving, while glancing out the window towards the pumps. At the time, we were in my friend's Chevy Malibu. He chuckled. "Well, there's your problem. These new cars are all plastic. There isn't nearly enough metal in it to attract any sort of giant magnetic force". Well, I never thought of it that way. Though I never had a moving experience here (literally and metaphorically), perhaps you have?

If you wish to seek Richford's Mystery Spot for yourself, try driving along the East Richford Slide Road, a road that snakes its way on both sides of the border. From the limited information on the phenomenon, this road best meets the descriptions. Here, somewhere along this road, you might just find it.

If you're interested into more puzzling earthly phenomena or actually being able to seek places where you will be **guaranteed** to defy gravity, check out Atlas Obscura's Essential Guide to Defying Gravity for some cool stuff.

A Vanishing Roadway?

Vermont is full of stories of haunted thoroughfares, but this one is perhaps the strangest I've come across. Somewhere in the town of Lyndon, there is a dirt road that vanishes, and reappears. Not much is known about this baffling byway, such as where it's exact location is, when it puts on it's vanishing act, and *why*. I've asked quite a few Lyndon residents about it, but most looked at me like I was insane. But it's an interesting story. My assumption is that no one lives on this undependable road, for surely

there would be a great confusion when it comes to mail getting delivered to the right place.

A Desert In The Mountains

There is an interesting place name in the tiny town of Mount Tabor that has always held my curiosity; Old atlases marked an area of steep slopes and silent swamps as “Old Job”, deep inside the Green Mountain National Forest. It’s an unusual name, and seems to be of some significance. There is even a hiking trail named in its honor that leads deep into the national forest. But what is the story behind this unusual moniker? In the late 1800s, Vermont lumberman and entrepreneur Silas Griffith, established a lumber mill in the mountains of Mount Tabor, and a company town, which boasted around 50 buildings including a school, store, boarding house, a blacksmith, and stables would be constructed. The small community would be named Griffith in his own honor, but later it would change its name to Old Job, named after one of the mills.

Expansive logging was done, which stripped the Green Mountains of their fine timber. His mills produced great mounds of sawdust, which he also saw profit in, and sold them to ice houses such as The Bellows Falls Ice Company, which used the numerous amounts of sawdust generated from the operations to pack the ice in their rail cars, to keep it from melting on long commutes. Today, the town has vanished, and the wilderness has since reclaimed what was once hers, but slight remnants of the former community can still be seen – such as this massive pile of sawdust, a barren and dry wasteland amidst a sea of green, near the aptly named Old Job Trail.



The startling remains of a sawdust pile in the middle of the otherwise verdant Green Mountain National Forest is the remnants of a once expansive logging operation executed here during the late 1800s (via backcountry.net)

An Audible Stretch of Sand

Somewhere in the annals of local lore and mystery, there is a beach *somewhere* between Cumberland Head and South Hero, that is said to inhabit an unusual property. According to the lore, which is almost as elusive as the beach in question, there is a beach where the sand is said to make dog noises.

Supposedly, if you fill 2 zip lock bags together with sand from this beach, and bang them together, the result is supposed to resemble a dog barking. Oh, and once you leave the beach, this strange phenomena is said to stop working. Maybe you’ve been here before? If so, you certainly have more incite than I do...

Floating Islands

In Whitingham lies a small body of water called Lake Sadawga, which can be seen off Route 100. Though the vast Harriman Reservoir just to the north may be larger and boast more mountain scenery, tiny Lake Sadawga has its own natural wonders to gawk at that are just as breathtaking, if you can spot it that is...

There is a rare natural phenomenon that can be found inside the small lake; a floating island about 100 acres in size, that moves around the lake. (Older newspaper accounts actually said that the island appeared to be growing in size at one point!) If spotted, it would be a strange and inspiring landscape indeed.

The lake was named for Indian Chief Sadawga, who made his summer camp along the shores of the lake centuries ago. But little is known about the commemorated chief. According to folklore, he once swam under the lake’s entire floating island without taking a single breath. But perhaps more

compelling is chief Sadawga's disappearance. Legend has it that him and a group of Indians had departed his summer camp on the lake, and canoed up the Deerfield River. But somewhere on their journey, he vanished without a trace. His friends had no explanation to what happened to the chief. Some assumed he had drowned, while others weren't so sure, the components were simply unknown. The mystery remains unsolved to this day. The floating island however, is easier to explain.

Known long ago by locals as "Swimming Land", the floating wonder has captivated Vermonters for well over a century. In 1890, a 6 foot stone dam was built at the outlet to the lake to benefit manufacturers along the Deerfield River, which also raised water levels by 6 feet and the lake size by roughly a quarter. At the time, there was some speculation whether the island actually floated or not. Because no part of the island had ever been more than two or three feet above the water, curious locals were wondering how the dam would effect the floating island. Would it rise with the water levels, or would it sink?

It took 48 hours for the lake waters to rise to the top of the dam. The island proved to be buoyant. But, about four chunks between one and three acres in size, had broken off entirely from the larger landmass, and swam around the lake independently. Sometimes they'd spread out at a measured distance of 50-60 rods from the main island, and other times they would be clustered together – the smaller ones floating around faster than the main island because it was easier for the wind to carry them.

The remarkable main island moves around much slower, historically from the east to west shores, and remarkably has never come within a quarter mile of the north shore. The island could also support and sustain life. There was a small forest of tamaracks that grew there – with trees reaching up to 25 feet high. It was supposed that the island's proximity to a marshy area at the south end of the lake provided enough vegetable matter in the water to keep the trees in a healthy condition. Between the trees were said to be a lush growth of Cranberry and Alder bushes. Today the island still contains a mixture of swampy growth, weeds and trees.

It was said that getting on the island was remarkably easy, but the real danger was sinking through once you stepped on it! Most of the surface was spongy and soft, but there were also parts that were incredibly solid. An old *San Francisco Globe* interview from 1890, spoke with Whitingham resident Judge Hosea B. Ballou, a former Windham County Judge, who recalled he used to boat out to the island as a kid and catch Bullpout through it, by using a scythe to pierce holes in the surface ground, which he said was made from some sort of vegetable mold.

Today, the floating island still exists, and some say still floats slowly and lazily around the lake. Though sadly, my trip down to beautiful Lake Sadawga last summer was uneventful. I was en route to Massachusetts and didn't have enough time to try to hang around and enjoy the beautiful lake. Maybe next time.

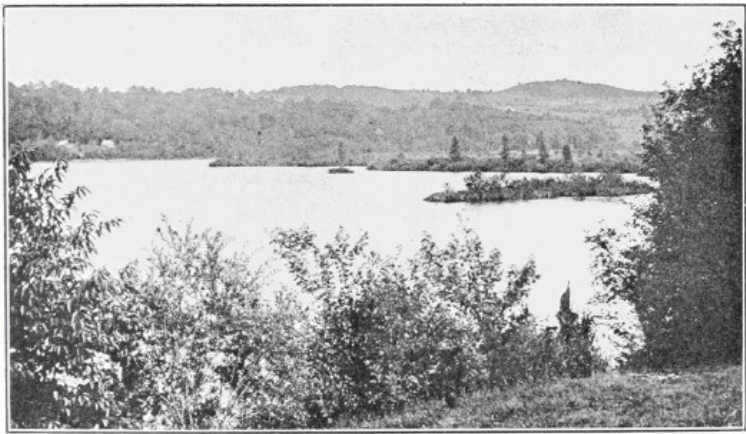
A View of Sadawga Lake. Two floating islands are shown in the central part of the picture, and behind them is the main floating island which they became detached from. | *Popular Science Monthly*, September 1911

Cross-section the two floating islands. One theory is that the large island grew out from the shore and was eventually broken off by high water levels | *Popular Science Monthly* – September, 1911

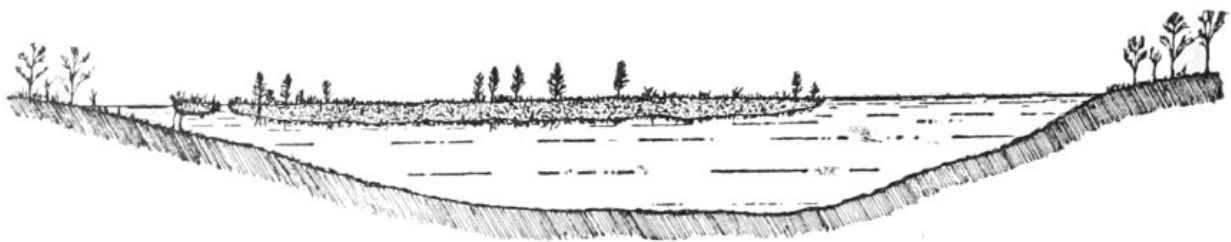
While researching this story, I discovered that our neighbors in the Bay State also have a bona-fide floating island, a ten thousand square foot one, in a ten acre body of water called Island Pond. According to *Boston.com*, the island is estimated to date back centuries. The base is constructed out



Lake Sadawga | Google Maps



of



sending it careening slowly around the pond. Scientists think that methane gas keeps the island afloat, and also contributes to a funny smell that locals say it has. Though a floating island can be awe inspiring, it can also be a nuisance. Sometimes the island crashes into things, taking out fences, docks, boathouses and trees on property that borders the shoreline, irking local residents. And sometimes, the island gets marooned on the shoreline. When that happens, it has to be towed back to the center of the pond. In October of 2005, that exact scenario happened, and it took eight men using two cables that were capable of pulling 45 tons, three hours to move it. The total bill came to around \$5,000 – which came out of the wallet of the local Catholic Diocese, who owns the island.

Water From Where?

In certain parts of Burlington, more notably around the YMCA on College and South Union, it is said that the sound of rushing water can sometimes be heard faintly coming from below the building. While this puzzling experience is said to happen rarely, it's possible that the answer may come from the lost ravine that once bisected the downtown district in two, that will filled with garbage in the 1800s to create more land for developing. At the bottom of the ravine ran a stream, a tributary of the Winooski River, which dumped into the lake around where Maple Street runs into Perkins Pier. Some speculate the stream is still there, despite the ravine being filled in over a century ago.

Inexplicable Water

Recently, I was excited to find out that The Vermont Digital Newspaper Archive was created, with the goal of scanning old newspapers from Vermont's past and uploading them online for anyone to browse and enjoy. Especially someone like myself, who loves uncovering the state's weird and lost history. Back in the day, newspapers sometimes ran stories about oddities, before the exploitable and unvenerable pop culture fanaticism of today. Though they were more or less intended as space fillers, they were straight to the point, and more importantly, they fascinated people. After spending hours of exhaustively searching the intimidatingly vast archives, which currently tops out at 260,000 pages, I used as many key words as I could muster and began to stumble upon a few intriguing mentions.

One find comes from a *Green Mountain Freeman* article (a defunct newspaper from Montpelier), dated January 25th, 1871. In Sheffield, on land owned by William Gray, there was a stone oddity. Through faded type, I was able to read that it was a large granite boulder, with a strange indent at the top that the paper called a “spherical excavation”, that was always filled with water. There was no visible or identifiable water source however, and yet, the stone bowl was always full. Even on the driest of summer days it would be full, so rainfall could be ruled out as the culprit. More curiously, the water levels were known to never run over the edge, it filled up and stayed full. Mr. Gray recalled dipping a cup in and pouring some of it out onto the ground, and how it immediately refilled and stopped precisely before overflowing.

More Stones

This spectacular find came from a *Green Mountain Freeman* article from 1874; Thomas Paddock claimed that his small farm in North Pownal was under supernatural assault, when his property was pelted and battered by a mysterious shower of stones that rained from the sky. The baffled Mr. Paddock suggested that someone must have invented some sort of giant catapult that was capable of hurling stones a great distance and yet couldn't be seen from his dooryard, in an attempt to solidify an explanation for an otherwise baffling event.

Digging deeper into this, The *Burlington Freepress and Times* described Paddock as a “respectable farmer of excellent character”, so for this to be some sort of yarn well spun or attempt at publicity would be out of character for the quiet man, who actually was attempting to keep the strange occurrence a secret. But word got out, and it spread. Starting in October, the stones continued to rain day and night, and they hit his house, barn, yard, and various outbuildings. They varied in size from tiny pebbles, to four or five inches in diameter. But in November, a boulder weighing more than 20 pounds dropped out of nowhere, and made a three inch impression where it landed on the ground. I was pleased to see there was far more to this curious story. In the book *Green Mountains, Dark Tales*, by Joseph Citro, he explained in a bit more detail.

An unusual observation was that when the stones touched down, they wouldn't skip or bounce as one normally would if thrown by human hand, instead, they would continue to roll along, as if propelled by some unseen force. Some were actually seen rolling up hill! Stranger, the stones were said to be hot to the touch, even on cold Winter nights. Some stones hit his house with force brutal enough to break the shingles on his roof. Mr. Paddock's theory of a giant catapult no longer seemed to make sense.

Around this time, Spiritualism was in it's heyday, and many people with scientific curiosity came to the Paddock farm to witness this peculiar phenomenon themselves, and attempt to offer some incite, with hopes to validate that the spirit world was in fact real. Because of the farm's proximity to a train station in nearby North Pownal, investigators, mediums, reporters, and curious tourists had easy access to the seemingly cursed site, and they came in droves. Thomas Paddock, who by this point was becoming distressed, even offered a reward of *one dollar* to anyone who could solve the mystery. Remember, a buck went a lot further back in those days.

Many tried to duplicate the phenomena, but failed. They couldn't see how stones could roll uphill or up and over the pitch of the roof without intervention, and the source of the heat that was so commonly reported, remained a head scratcher. The twenty pound boulder was also curious, for no one was able to replicate the indent in the ground when they attempted to toss a rock of similar weight and characteristics, they only succeeded in making a slight impression.

Eventually, it was an intrepid group of investigators from nearby North Adams, Massachusetts, who came forward with a suspicion. After interviewing Mr. Paddock, his family, and his hired hands, it was

a hired boy named Jerry who came under suspicion, as he was the most frequent witness to the phenomenon. Jerry seemed to be very interested in all of it, and animatedly spoke with them and said how much he believed in spirits and how he would wondrously watch the falling rock displays. And just as Jerry grabbed a pail and went to the barn to start his chores, a stone fell and hit the roof of the house. Everyone heard it. The witnesses saw the stone soar from the direction of the barn, and as ran to investigate the stone, Jerry, who had also heard the stone, immediately was able to point out where it had landed. The stone had soil on it from the garden, where Jerry was in only moments ago. They made their conclusion, and decided that Jerry had to be the force behind all of this. Whether they deemed Jerry as a prankster or someone with poltergeist abilities, it's hard to say. They seemed to be happy with their conclusion, and the visitors stopped coming. But we'll probably never know exactly what happened at Thomas Paddock's North Pownal farm.

The Orb Of The Valley

A famous (in the realm of Vermont weirdness anyways) and strange light is said to float around the deep hollows of the remote Lost Nation area, located in the hills that make up the Bakersfield-Fairfield town line. The glowing orb is said to be roughly the size of a basketball, hover around 8 feet above the ground, and move slowly and silently through the woods. Called "The Orb Of The Valley", it may be a spook light, UFO, swamp gas, a spirit, or something totally unknown. More interestingly, it may also possess some sort of intelligence which enables it to take notice of it's environment and move around trees and other obstacles. Another peculiar characteristic it has, which sets it apart from other stories of floating lights and orbs across the county, is that it can stop and observe a curious or startled bystander, before continuing on it's way to wherever such things go.

Whispering Statue

Barre is a town of colorful stories, many which are told from the famous granite veins that gave the town life, and the wild monuments made from it that can be found in the town's numerous cemeteries and downtown plazas. However, there is one monument in particular that holds my curiosity. A valiant statue made of local granite stands as a stark gray centerpiece to Barre's Vermont City Park. Erected in the 1920s and officially named "Youth Triumphant", the courageous cynosure, boldly resting against giant sword and observing Barre traffic, acts as an almost startlingly bold memorial to local veterans. But this seemingly innocuous statue seems to be known to others for another reason entirely.

Its unofficial nickname, "The Whispering Statue", might tell you why. Local lore maintains that if you whisper to someone at the other end of the plaza, they will be able to hear your voice as clear as if you were standing right behind them.

So, how does this acoustical anomaly work? The best description I was able to get was that if 2 people sat at opposite ends of the horseshoe shaped granite bench behind the statue, the acoustics will somehow "bounce" off the statue and travel to your partner in waiting. And as the theories claim, they will be able to hear you as if you were whispering into their ear. But someone else told me that in order for it to work, the trick was that you had to sit so that the statue blocked your view of the other person. When I visited however, the traffic noise was so thunderous, I could barely hear myself speak to my friend standing next to me. The desolate park lies at the confluence of Routes 302 and 14 in the center of town.

Was this bizarre game of telephone somehow incorporated into the statue's original design? Or perhaps this was just an accidental feature of its framework discovered sometime after it was completed? And most importantly, have you tried it? Did it work?



DSC_0351_pe

Burled Forest

On a sandy plateau that climbs above a remote stretch of waterfront bike path south of North Beach, in an area the locals call “the back 40”, is a natural phenomenon known as the “Burled Forest”, a patch of woods that have been deformed by the fierce southwestern winds that blast off the lake.

Each tree sports multiple “burls” – enlarged growth areas – along its trunk. The trees are Box Elders, whose branches are easily snapped off by the strong wind gusts which are particularly

prevalent here. The wind prunes the trees into some Seussian and grotesque forms that aren’t found anywhere else nearby.

Walk around and you’ll notice not only many trees containing these burls, but that several have new branch sprouts on their bulbous trunks. While it’s not unusual to see new growth on a tree, this actually offers some insight behind the phenomenon. When the malleable green sprouts get larger on their way to becoming full fledged branches, they enlarge the trunk a little, creating burls. As they grow heavier, they become more vulnerable and susceptible to breaking off in heavy wind gusts, which many do. This cycle has been continuously repeated over the years, re-shaping the trees. Evidence of this lies all around you, the forest floor is strewn with dead branches underneath the tall grasses and weeds.

So, what’s the reason for this? Why here, while the surrounding woods are unaffected entirely? The answer lies in what is literally below your feet, the sand. The bluff is practically a giant sand mound that rises above the lake. In sandy and wind battered conditions like this, Box Elders love to grow, especially when the soils are continuously disturbed by varying intrusions, such as human interaction or natural elements like the wind. This also explains why this seems to be a rather isolated occurrence, as the woods around the area don’t have the same formations.

The Abenaki Indians of the region called Box Elder *pilkimizi* – which can be literally translated to “new land tree.” The indigenous name takes note of the tree’s propensity to colonize “new land”, because of their ability to grow in some pretty uninhabitable areas.

The area is combed by well worn human trails that have worn actual trenches out the sandy banks, as the small patch of woods is a popular highway and shortcut used by local youth to get from North Avenue down to the bike path. If you dig a little, you can find bits of brick, broken china, and other artifacts that suggest this place may have been a former dump, a find not uncommon in Burlington’s less developed areas. Some of the trash, like a creepy collection of rusted cages, a few abandoned strollers and old pallets, has been lugged and recycled just down the trail and used for the foundations of dirt jumps, a collection of mountain bike trails kids call “Boscoe’s Trails”. But that’s another mystery it seems, because no one has been able to explain the reason behind that moniker. I asked around. No one seems to know who the hell Boscoe is.

Balancing Rock

To some, the grandeur of nature is proof that the universe has a sense of humor. A natural oddity like Balancing Rock, resting high on the slopes of Mount Elmore, is one such example. This boulder,

The werewolf of...Hull? Locals report sightings of 8ft beast

03:37 EST, 15 May 2016 |

dailymail.co.uk

Daily Mail

MailOnline US - news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories

The werewolf of Hull! Witnesses claim they've spotted 8ft tall fanged beast with human-like features nicknamed 'Old Stinker'

a German Shepherd

• Locals will gather at the full moon to hunt for what might be 'Old Stinker'

- Witnesses spotted a 'half man half dog' beast on the Barmston Drain banks
- One couple said they saw the creature eating

By Jessica Ware For Mailonline

A number of werewolf sightings have been reported in woods outside of Hull, sparking locals to organise a hunt for the beast on the next full moon.

Over the past months, witnesses have come forward to speak of spotting a huge, hairy creature around the Barmston Drain, a man-made channel near the town of Beverley.

Some locals believe the sightings are evidence of a mythical Yorkshire beast called 'Old Stinker'.



 The Barmston Drain, east Yorkshire, where several people claim to have seen a werewolf

Witnesses say that the beast looks half man half wolf, like the creature from the American Werewolf series (pictured, in London)

A woman who sighted the potential werewolf in December told the Express 'It was stood upright one moment. The next it was down on all fours running like a dog. I was terrified.

'It vaulted 30ft over to the other side and vanished up the embankment and over a wall into some allotments.'

She said that it both ran on all two legs and on all fours, as if with the qualities of both human and wolf.

Another couple said they saw something 'tall and hairy' eating a dog next to the channel, which runs through the countryside.

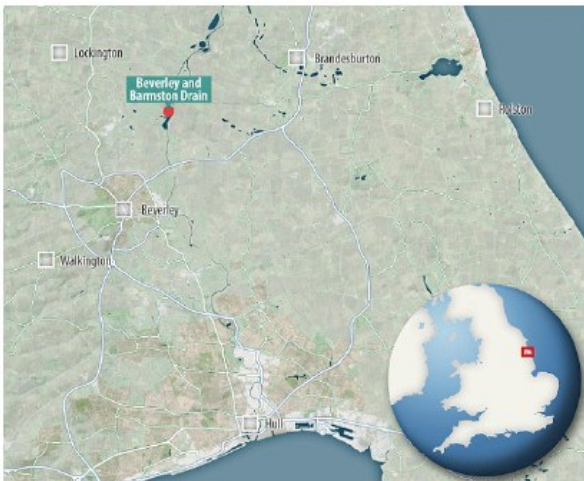
They added that it jumped over an 8ft-high fence, with the animal in its mouth.



Another woman who was walking her dog spotted something 'half dog half human', she told the

Express.

Her dog, she said, refused to go any further along the path they were walking down.



One woman said the beast was on all fours, and then ran away on hind legs with a large animal in its mouth

According to the newspaper, locals who believe something could be lurking around the banks of the Barmston Drain

are going to go on a hunt on the night of the next full moon.

They will be armed with cameras to prove their scary sightings were real.

Local Labour councillor Steve Wilson has said he was willing to offer his services to the effort.

He the Express 'I am happy to keep a diary of sightings by people around here and report them to Hull Council.'

Witnesses and folklore experts have been quick to link the sightings to the well-known legend of Old Stinker.

Old Stinker is said to roam in the Yorkshire Wolds, an area of beautiful countryside north of the Barmston Drain.

More specifically, the beast is supposed to stalk the Wold Newton Triangle, an area known for mysterious activity. For centuries, tales have circulated of zombies, ghosts, the Old Stinker werewolf and other paranormal activity.

'There is the legend of a werewolf called Old Stinker – a great hairy beast with red eyes, who was so called because he had bad breath,' author Charles Christian told the Hull Daily Mail.

'It was known for the wolves to dig up the corpses from graveyards. From that sprung the idea that they are supernatural beings, who took the form of werewolves.

'When people would glimpse what they thought was the rear lights of a car in front, it would instead reveal itself to be the red eyes of a wolf.'

But now, those well-versed in the paranormal fear that Old Stinker has outgrown his triangular haunt, and moved to the Barmston Drain.

WEREWOLF OF WORCESTER? COUPLE'S SKETCH OF WHAT THEY THOUGHT WAS A BIG CAT SPARKS CONCERN IT WAS A MORE UNUSUAL BEAST

A sketch done by Robert Ingram of the beast he and his wife Nicola believe they saw in the Cotswolds

A terrified couple who claim to have came face-to-face with a black panther while driving through the



English countryside have drawn a sketch of the blood-thirsty beast to warn the public what to look out for.

But the pencil drawing that Robert Ingram and wife Nicola have come up with is now likely to raise fears that what they encountered, rather than being a big cat, was in fact a werewolf.

Their visual interpretation appears to show an animal with almost human like traits: big eyes, eyebrows, a long nose and full set of teeth.

It also looks to hold its posture like a homosapien, far different from that of the feline they believe to have spotted.

Robert's black-and-white sketch does, however, emphasise that the animal the pair saw was covered in a hair or fur like coating,

like a black panther.

It does appear to have chest hair though, which again distances the bizarre creature from the big cat more commonly found in Asia and Africa then middle England.

The pair encountered what they are convinced was a black panther while driving through Croome Court - a National Trust property - at 1am last week.

They claim the black outline - which they took a blurry photo of - was as tall as their car window, must have weighed around nine stone, and was ready to pounce at their vehicle before he put the foot down and they sped off.



The Ingrams thought they saw a big cat - but Robert's sketch seems to show a more werewolf-esque beast

They were driving at night when they spotted the creature, which jumped in front of the car. Robert tried to take a photo but it was not very clear. Luckily, police have the sketch use in their investigation

Although he and Nicola struggled to get a clear picture of the cat on camera, Robert has now produced the sketch in a bid to help cops and animal welfare officers find out what it is - and figure out how to catch it.

The incident follows a sighting in Malvern earlier this month when a woman claimed an animal 'bigger than a dog' was 'eating something fluffy'.

Robert, a full-time father-of-three, said: 'It was petrifying. It looked like it was on steroids.

'We were driving along outside the national trust property, there are lots of open fields around there, when suddenly, I spotted something in the road ahead.

'It was getting dark, but I saw its eyes reflect in my headlights.

'We stopped the car, and it was just standing there.



'We'd heard rumours about an escaped panther in the area, but we'd thought it was a load of nonsense.

'But when I saw this animal with my own eyes, I was stunned. It was enormous, far too big for a fox or a dog. It must have weighed about 9 stone - about the same as a slim adult.

'It looked right at us and walked up to the car. It then lowered the front of its body and looked like it was going to pounce.

'Some of my mates have said they don't believe me, but we came face to face with this thing. We know what we saw.

Robert reckons that the beast may have escaped from a zoo. There have been dozens of claimed sightings of big cats in Worcestershire over the past few years.



Comments (736)

Geoff_T, Hollywood, United States, 2 days ago

Late April 1st gag caught and published by the Daily Mail? It might be an animal escaped from captivity, it won't be an item of fiction.

Sicknote337, Hull, United Kingdom, 2 days ago

Let just say we humour them and accept theres some beast bobbin about. Whats the intensions should you find the creature ?

Pilchard the cat, Up North, United Kingdom, 2 days ago

Do you know who I am? I'm Mrs. Ronnie Pickerwing! "

Piggy, Melbourne, 3 days ago

I saw one beat like this one Canberra.

TWOSHOES, Lithgow, Australia, 3 days ago

If you fall for this then I have a nice Rollex I can sell you

kidding, Forest, Guernsey, 3 days ago

Someone loves watching too much TV and a few drinks

edomeara, London, United Kingdom, 3 days ago

Good to see the Tories canvassing in Labour heartlands

EmmaMelbourne, Melbourne, Australia, 3 days ago

Lol at the drawing. It's just a werewolf. Leave it alone and feed it the odd German shepherd

Pam, Michigan, United States, 3 days ago

Organizing a hunt "armed with cameras"?? Seriously? lol Better hope if you find it, it only likes dog meat.

on a roll, Sydney, Australia, 3 days ago

Eating a German Shepard ?? You sure it wasn't just a Chinese person ??

on a roll, Sydney, Australia, 3 days ago

Hahaha

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Residents trembling in terror after seeing '8 FOOT WEREWOLF' in British city

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Sunday Express

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Residents trembling in terror after seeing '8 FOOT WEREWOLF' in British city

A CITY is trembling in terror as the full moon approaches, after a spate of werewolf sightings.

By Mark Branagan, exclusive

PUBLISHED: 00:01, Sun, May 15, 2016 | UPDATED: 09:35, Sun, May 15, 2016



HULL NEWS/GETTY

Seven separate eye witnesses claim to have spotted the 8ft tall creature lurking in an abandoned industrial area outside the centre of Hull.

Residents and folklore experts believe the mythical beast, said to turn from a human to wolf at a new moon, is Old Stinker.

According to a centuries-old legend the foul-breathed creature prowls the Yorkshire

Wolds.

I was terrified

Local woman

The lonely banks of Barmston Drain, a water channel built in 1798 to dry out salt marshes, are where the creature was first reported before Christmas.

One woman claims to have seen it turn from man to beast as she stood quaking on a bridge above.

She said: "It was stood upright one moment. The next it was down on all fours running like a dog. I was terrified.

"It bounded along on all fours, then stopped and reared up on to its back legs, before running down the embankment towards the water.

"It vaulted 30ft over to the other side and vanished up the embankment and over a wall into some allotments."

A couple saw “something tall and hairy” eating a German Shepherd dog next to the Drain.

They stopped to get a closer look and saw it jump an 8ft high fence before vanishing into the night, its prey still in its jaws.

And a woman walking her dog along the watercourse spotted something “half-man, half-dog” in the distance.

Locals plan a werewolf hunt at the next moon

She was terrified, and her pet began shaking and refused to go any further along the path.

Now locals plan a werewolf hunt with cameras and recording equipment at the next moon.

Local councillor Steve Wilson has offered to keep an incident log.

He said: “I am happy to keep a diary of sightings by people around here and report them to Hull Council.”

Witnesses say when the creature transforms, its upper body is more wolf than man – similar to the beast in the American Werewolf films.

Councillor Steve Wilson has offered to keep a diary of sightings

The Hull creature bears an uncanny resemblance to the legend of Old Stinker – said to prowl The Wold Newton Triangle, an area of eerie goings on near Scarborough.

Charles Christian, author of A Travel Guide To Yorkshire's Weird Wolds, said sightings went back centuries.

He said: “The Yorkshire Wolds was actually one of the last parts of England to have wild wolves. Old Stinker was said to be operating on the other side of them but it would be no distance at all for a large animal to get to Hull.”

Locals fear the creature may have decided to claim the overgrown area as its turf

He added: “When you get multiple sightings combined with a tradition of stories going back centuries it is hard to ignore the possibility something might be there.”

Worried locals have sought help from Mike Covell, an expert in the supernatural.

He said: “I was sceptical at first, but then more and more people contacted me saying they had seen the same thing.

“No one really knows what to do. You can hardly pop down the local council office or police station and say you’d like to report a werewolf.”

38 Comments

Alien In This World

Where's Wallace and Gromit when you need them?

KrankBuster

At least it's more entertaining than the other political and war drivel. Keep it up. The nay-sayers are just jealous because they have no imagination.

Airborne Ally

It's not a werewolf it's a horse !

lucaswillen05

Ok It's a werehorse! :-) Undead equines!

marko

I used to be a werewolf but i'm alright noooooooooowwwwwwww

florence4

They are as common as muck in Hull, last time I was in Hull Had a pint with a few of them, they like a few pints better for their complexion.

Itsme

just another immigrant looking for the food bank...or was it the blood bank...

NotInMyName

I grew up in Hull and never heard this myth, saw plenty of odd looking folks and a lot of people going crazy under a full moon (or any phase of the moon for that matter) but never heard of a werewolf roaming Hull.

GrammarTiger

"A city is trembling in terror."

Oh, please.....

Who writes this stuff - and are they sober when they do?

Although "writing" is probably a decidedly inaccurate noun to use in this case.

Does the editor actually look at this tosh as it passes across his desk?

If so, I am assuming that he encourages it.

Absolutely dire, appalling, inept and pathetic drivel...

lyonedes

Utter claptrap.

(edited)16 hours ago

lucaswillen05

Is i actually aRomanian immigrant? Dracula came from that part of the world (the region of Transylvania) OK I know Dracula was a vampire, not a werewolf but close enough! :-)

pollypleck

you could be right, Dracula has got past the "border control" and is living on benefits, or is Jekyll and Hyde???????????

lucaswillen05

Where did I put that silver bullet, crucifix and wooden stake?:-)

Redsquirrel

This no laughing matter The RSPCA should be informed of groups of men bent on the

demise of a defenseless Werewolf who is going about Werewolfing and chewing up a few plebs. It's time to ban Silver bullets! please sign the petition to protect Werewolf's, after all they are half human.

lyonedes

Isn't it? Utter bile.

lucaswillen05

What a "howler" :-)

sw1000xg

Let's hope he gets a taste for immigrants.

lucaswillen05

Well, the real Dracula aka Vlad Tepes (or Vlad the Impaler) had a thng for impaling Muslims. His friends apparently called him "Spike" I think you get the point - so to speak! :-)

AlfGarnet

Probably a FAKE street beggar, Britain is top heavy with these bone idle (most very able bodied) Nanny state scrounging, daily shirker BENEFIT, workshy..

Rodargal

perhaps it was your beloved boris johnson he he.

Kochanski

Beware the moon, stick to the road, oooopsss....stood in werewolf sh!t again.

Ronnie Stephen

Never had this before all the immigration. Vote out

RabJim

A werepig is what is needed to terrify those that cannot be mentioned

lucaswillen05

True. But they don't like dogs either. And a wolf is a kind of canine. So a werewolf should do the job just as well! :-)

SOOKY

I saw something tall and hairy yesterday, it was my mother in law.

dinguscan

thats a giant otter hee hee

Saxon

I saw something tall and hairy this morning when I looked in the mirror.

lucaswillen05

Harold Godwinson? Sorry that was too hard to resist! :-)

TheTruthmustOut

Was it yelling "I were a wolf but now am a man" haha.

lucaswillen05

Ow ow owooooohhhh Howling at the moon :-)

Boudica

Just waiting for the Remainers to tell is this a small example of the curse that will befall us all if we leave the EU...

manoftruth

I used to be a Werewolf but I am all right nowoooooooooooooooo.

Jabberwocky

Thanks for the laugh of the day, DE. Not April the first again, is it?

outtaEU

more old Yorkshire b/s tales to improve tourism? a were wolf?? a were rabbit or just a drunk local having a quick one into the drain?

RobertRE

Cr@p!

EUSSR HATER

It was Prescott having a bad night out!

pollypleck

could have been Coby ????

EUSSR HATER

Corbyn is more of a sheep in wolf s clothing!

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Werewolf Sightings in Yorkshire

opengravesopenminds.com

Open Graves, Open Minds

The Open Graves, Open Minds project relates the undead in literature, art, and other media to questions concerning gender, technology, consumption, and social change. It extends to all narratives of the fantastic, the fabulous, and the magical.



Posted on 15th May 2016 by firekrank

The Daily Express (amongst other tabloid papers) has reported on a series of presumed werewolf sightings in the Yorkshire Wolds. Now, sadly I am not donning a leather outfit and heading north with a holster and silver bullets, however I did find the reporting very interesting. Firstly, there was the assumption of both the presence of the lycanthrope occurring around the full moon and that it was an anthropoid creature. The full moon is a relatively new addition to werewolf lore which, though propounded in Victorian texts such as George W. M. Reynold's *Wagner the Wehr-Wolf* (1857), was consolidated when the werewolf premièred on the silver screen. (For further information see both *Werewolf of London* (1935) and *The Wolf Man* (1941)). The half-man, half-wolf version of the werewolf also became part of the werewolf blueprint during this period, something which the article acknowledges. This relationship was cemented in the Daily Mail version of the report by using a picture from *An American Werewolf in London* (1981), perhaps as an homage to the opening sequence which is set on the Yorkshire Moors. In comparison the Daily Express chose rather natural images. There were repeated uses of wolves and a full moon. Visually then, a connection was made between real-life wolves and their monstrous counterpart.

In the reporting itself, this connection was made more explicit as the article stated that the sightings had occurred in a part of Yorkshire where some of the last English wolves were meant to have lived. This seems to suggest that the memory of wolves haunts the area albeit in a rather malignant form. Traditional folklore was also invoked in the form of Old Stinker: a hairy, red-eyed lupine beast with terrible breath. Looking at accounts of Old Stinker it appears that the consensus today is that it is a werewolf-type monster. (Though I am not sure whether this is because of how we view all wolf-beasts in modern terminology). The article then, sensationalist and tongue-in-cheek though it may be, manages to encompass some very complex ideas about the werewolf today. Though it is clear that the article acknowledges the influence of popular culture on the werewolf, there is still a symbiosis of 'ancient' folklore and natural history in order to create some validity to the claims. It's a brilliant example of the complex relationship between the Gothic, folklore and the modern imagination.

2 Responses to *Werewolf Sightings in Yorkshire*

1. Pingback: Werewolf Sightings in Yorkshire — Open Graves, Open Minds | pandorassuitcaseblog



2. Lucy Northenra says:
16th May 2016 at 12:09 am

This is fascinating a real life folk panic involving werewolves!! I am doing some research on 'Old Stinker' to see how old this legend is and to investigate the creature's connection with extinct wolves. I will be following this story very closely! It is perfect for CoW!!

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What happened at Anjikuni Lake? | Historic Mysteries

historicmysteries.com

HISTORIC MYSTERIES

Historic Mysteries

estronal October 6, 2015
Legends

Anjikuni Lake can be found deep into the Kivallig Region of rural Nunavut in

Canada. Nestled along the Kazan River, it is a fine spot for trout and/or pike fishing, both of which are plentiful in the waters of the area. Anjikuni quickly became the established home to an Inuit tribe that grew into a colony and became famous almost overnight on a cold November night in 1930.



Did an entire village disappear from Anjikuni Lake?

Joe Labelle was a Canadian fur trapper, and an experienced one at that. He was a more than capable outdoorsman and was well acquainted with the area. He knew that the Inuit had formed a community and had visited them on occasions in the past. Labelle was familiar

with the Inuit tales of wood spirits that were allegedly malicious and that this remote part of Canada was also steeped in the legends of the Wendigo. Despite this, the Inuit tribe were a friendly people and would always welcome passing travellers and offer them a bed for the night.

Labelle normally had very little cause to feel gripped by fear or anxiety, but this particular night proved to be different. The full moon that was overhead cast an eerie illumination across the village. Nothing was moving. The army of huskies that were normally boisterous with the arrival of visitors were strangely quiet as well. The only sounds that Labelle could hear were his own snow-shoes and the hollow echo of his greeting. A frontier man such as Labelle would take any apprehension felt and use it to compel an investigation. This is precisely what he did upon entering the village.

The normal signs of life were completely absent. No laughter or the hubbub of conversation was detected. Even worse was the total lack of smoke emanating from chimneys that was only to have been expected. Labelle did notice that a fire had been started off in the distance and made his way towards it. The fire itself looked as though it had been burning for a considerable time. On closer inspection, Labelle discovered that someone had begun the preparations for a meal, but never finished. The stew was ruined.

Labelle continued onwards further into the village, still hopeful of bumping into someone that may explain precisely what had happened. Now rampant, Joe began to physically examine the homes of the tribe to determine if there was a hint or clue as to what might have caused them to up and leave. Unfortunately no answers were forthcoming. Some of the discoveries he made went a little way with his train of thought. Many homes were well stocked with food and weapons. In one location, Labelle found another badly burned meal; in another he found a discarded repair of a junior sealskin that had yet to be completed. While there was no definitive answer regarding what had taken place, it must surely have been a sudden event that was widespread and affected all 30 men, women and children in the village. Labelle found no signs of a struggle, but did find many items that a departing group would have required to bring with them. Food, arms and clothing had all been abandoned.



Anjikuni Lake

Further

investigations led to a pair of discoveries that chilled the blood of even this hardened veteran. As far as he was able to tell, whatever took place was quite a recent occurrence. His fruitless efforts to find someone within the village exhausted, Labelle instead considered where they might have ended up going. Scanning the terrain in and around the village, he found no fresh tracks in the snow aside from his own. The most gruesome discovery he made was the reason for the absence of the dogs. Every single one of them had starved to death. This was more than enough to convince him to continue onwards to the closest telegraph office – located several miles further on. That did mean ignoring basic necessities such food and shelter, but that was considered a small price to pay in case whatever it was decided to pay another visit.

Once Labelle reached the telegraph office, he reported his encounter and insisted the Mounted Police launched an official investigation. En route to the village, the RCMP noticed an isolated shack that belonged to another trapper called Armand Laurent and his two sons. When questioned, they said they saw a large cylindrical object that transformed into a bullet shape before heading towards the lake. Unconfirmed reports also claim that when the RCMP actually reached the village, they found every grave in the burial ground and been opened and emptied. The headstones had been neatly stacked in piles either side of the graves, ruling out animals as the culprits. The RCMP conducted an intense and thorough investigation but could not produce one credible reason as to what had happened. What little

leeway they made just led to even more questions that only served to deepen the mystery. It was their conclusion that the Inuit people had been missing for about 8 weeks prior to Labelle's arrival. Using that as accurate, then how had the dogs managed to starve so quickly? There was time for burning food to be discovered and the dogs themselves were a vital tool for the tribe as a whole. It seems inconceivable that they would intentionally cause harm or distress to the animals. And if they had been missing for two months, who lit the fire that Labelle found smouldering?

This is one mass disappearance, much like the Roanoke Colony, that will most likely never be solved.

Sources

Mysterious Universe

Martin J Clemens

All that is interesting

Unexplained Mysteries

Sites pulled 1 October 2015

estronal

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When Everyday is Doomsday: Slip, sliding away

wordpress.com

<https://idoubtit.wordpress.com/2016/05/10/when-everyday-is-doomsday-slip-sliding-away/>

Doubtful ~ Sharon Hill

Science, Sensibility and Practical Skepticism



Screen Shot 2016-05-10 at 6.14.59 PM

When Everyday is Doomsday: Slip, sliding away

May 10, 2016 idoubtit2 Comments

As a geologist, I get mightily annoyed with apocalyptic-themed sites that broadcast media reports about normal processes of the planet with the tone that *End times are upon us!* Every friggin' day! The end of the world seems to be perpetually right around the corner. Every report of strange sounds (often hoaxes or explainable),

lights in the sky (typically meteors and space junk), weird or destructive weather, mass mortality events, earthquakes and volcano eruptions, are reported as a sign of the end times. With the ability of the internet to transmit nearly instant details of each event from anywhere in the world, it may seem like they are happening more often. But there is way more too it than that and human activity plays a part.

Doom-promoting web sites capitalize on fear and paranoia of End Times believers. Examples of these sites include strangesounds.org, sott.net, earthfiles.com (Linda Moulton Howe's site), endtimeheadlines.org, AboveTopSecret, beforeitsnews.com, and the forum [Godlike Productions](http://GodlikeProductions). These sites are really popular, far more popular than science-based sites, sadly. But, it's hardly surprising. Sensational stories get passed around and clicked on more than sober ones. They are re-framed to suit agendas, connected to other events that are unrelated, and the average person mistakenly thinks that there may be something going on to be afraid of.

I've dug into many of these stories in the past to reveal that the causes are not global, they aren't indicators that something catastrophic occurring, they are local events with reasonable explanations. That agenda does not get attention but it **should** because it's costing us a lot of money and unnecessary trouble.

Giant cracks in the earth that form suddenly sound like the beginning of a sci-fi movie that won't end well. There are various reasons why they form and most are readily explainable with a little investigation. Last week, a new crack appeared on a hillside in central PA, near Altoona. The doom-sayers proclaimed it was related to [tectonic] plate movement that might

indicate an earthquake. Or that it was related to “earth changes” that hint that those changes will not be good for earth inhabitants. Some people assume anything bad that happens anywhere in the US is caused by fracking for natural gas. RUN AWAY! they said. PANIC!

They are mistaken and irresponsible. The answer to this problem can be described by a very generalized equation.

$[(\text{Geology} + \text{water}) * \text{land surface changes}] - (\text{money} + \text{forethought}) = \text{A Big Mess}$

Even if you looked for the less hyperbolic answer to this problem online, it's not easy to find but the locals are clued in. At least a few local papers have consulted engineering experts who explained the obvious problems with this site. I haven't had the chance to visit the site to confirm what's going on but we can tell quite a bit from secondary sources and information available from mapping. Let's take a look at the setting.



map view

The crack appears relatively minor at first and then widens on the steep and poorly-vegetated lower slope behind the southeast corner of this shopping center. It also rained quite a bit in April. Pennsylvania has clay-rich soils and rock formations that will shrink, swell and give way under not so extreme seasonal conditions. This is called “mass wasting” when a large section of earth moves via gravity. It's not uncommon. It's basically rapid erosion, a landslide, a slope failure. In this case, the deliberate changes made to the land surface and altering the slope accelerated the process. When we look at the topography, we see how close the vertical cut into the hillside is to the building. A gentle buffer slope was not developed. That certainly saved money during land development. A geologist friend very familiar with this area

informs me that the road cut to the north includes bank reinforcements to prevent slides. There are apparently none behind the shopping center. And, he said, this slope showed signs of heavy erosion. It's not really a surprise that this occurred. Now, the slope must be restabilized by excavation back to the tension-cracked area. The businesses had to shut down temporarily, so it certainly cost more to do this emergency remediation work than to do it right the first time.

The crack is in the light area directly up from the word “Google”. You can see the very steep cut face created (though the image likely looks overly exaggerated). Check out the video from the local news station.

Basic geology tells us that rain that falls on the mountain will drain over land and below ground towards the valley stream, Brush Run. An upslope swale (visible in the picture above) collects the runoff and diverts it around the area but it may not be working quite as planned. It's not unusual for developers to cut corners or overlook potential hazards, and unforeseen events do happen. But, let's be very clear, this giant crack is by no stretch an earth catastrophe, a seismically active fault, or a signal of coming doom for humanity. It's just a geo-engineering oops. When you manipulate the land, there are consequences.



However, they consequences are NOT destruction of humanity. The reasonable followup explanations were not given on the Apocalypse-fest websites. None of these sites have geologists as contributors nor did they consult a geologist or geo-engineer before concluding it was so terrible. Reasonable

explanations don't make for web clicks. But don't people deserve to know the truth instead of hyped nonsense? I think so.

Earth changes? Yeah, that does happen every day – always has, always will. We humans manage to get by. Cool your jets, Doomsday Preppers, humans won't go so soon into the good night.

2 thoughts on “When Everyday is Doomsday: Slip, sliding away”

1. **James, brother of Jesus** says:

May 10, 2016 at 8:25 pm

Hi Sharon. As far as the end times being right around the corner? Every frigging day? They've been “right around the corner” for about 2,000 years. And yet, and yet...and yet some people are still right there with Archbishop Ussher. Oh well, so much for progress. Great post, by the way.

2. **Tom Luman** says:

May 10, 2016 at 8:56 pm

“Come on children you're acting like children,
every generation thinks its the last,
thinks its the end of the world”

-Wilco

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The island where nothing makes sense - BBC News

bbc.com



• 19 April 2016
• From the section Magazine



Ascension Island

Image copyright Alamy

In today's Magazine

Ascension Island is a tiny dot of green in the tropical mid-Atlantic, a volcanic outpost of empire where it's hot and cold at the same time. It's a place where Charles Darwin helped inspire an alarming change, writes Matthew Teller.

A scrap of British territory marooned in the tropical mid-Atlantic halfway between Brazil and Africa, Ascension is a place of enduring oddity.

Officially, nobody is from there. The UK government denies the right of abode, turning Ascension's 800 or so British citizens - some of whom have lived on the island for decades - into temporary visitors. To enter, you must get the written permission of the Queen's representative, known rather chillingly as the Administrator.

The airport - whose runway was once the longest in the world, designed to accommodate the Space Shuttle - is operated by the US Air Force, which grants limited access to Britain. Nasa tracked the Apollo Moon landings from Ascension. The European Space Agency monitors rocket launches from here.

Hilltops across the island are festooned with aerial arrays and satellite dishes - but who is listening, and to what, nobody is willing to say.

Ascension's bizarre natural environment is the perfect setting for all this strangeness.



Sooty terns - wideawakes - at the so-called Wideawake Fairs seabird colony

Image caption

One sweltering afternoon I drove out past Wideawake Airfield, popularly believed to have been named for its role as a late-night refuelling stop for RAF planes flying between the UK and the Falklands.

Down towards the shore, I came nose-to-beak with the real reason for the name - hundreds of thousands of sooty terns, known as "wideawakes" for their constant cawing chatter, echoing ceaselessly day and night across dry lava plains.

A geological infant, Ascension is the tip of an undersea volcano which rose above the waves only a million years ago. It may still have been erupting as recently as the 16th Century. The pounding Atlantic has barely begun to erode the contorted, charcoal-black lava flows that ring the island's shoreline, looking like they cooled yesterday.



Map showing Ascension Island

It is roughly the size of Guernsey, and most of it is as hot and dry as a desert. What soil there is, is clinker. Until the British settled in 1815 it was uninhabited. The largest land animal was a variety of land crab. Ships didn't linger.

Yet sailors visiting in 1726 discovered a tent and a diary.

They turned out to belong to Leendert Hasenbosch, a Dutch mariner who had been set ashore on Ascension the year before as punishment for

homosexuality. The diary records Hasenbosch's increasingly desperate search for water and supplies, as he resorted to drinking the blood of turtles and seabirds and, eventually, his own urine.

The poor man's final fate is unknown - no skeleton was ever discovered.

Almost 80 years later, when the British garrisoned Ascension to discourage French attempts at rescuing Napoleon - who had been exiled to St Helena, the nearest point of land, 700 miles southeast - they too could find virtually no fresh water.

"Near the coast, nothing grows," wrote Charles Darwin.

"The island is entirely destitute of trees."

Darwin discussed how to make Ascension more habitable for humans with his friend Joseph Hooker, later director of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, who visited in 1843. Hooker devised a plan.

He would plant trees all over the 859m (2817ft) summit of Green Mountain, Ascension's highest point. Foliage would trap moisture from the warm southeasterly winds that sweep continuously over, letting it drip down to ground level to assure a water supply for the troops. He would introduce grasses to create pasture for livestock, and soil to plant vegetables.



Giant ficus trees with aerial roots, planted on Green Mountain

Image caption

"As you can see by the vegetation surrounding us, this plan was spectacularly successful," says biologist Dr Sam Weber, standing wreathed in fog amid a mini cloud forest of dripping ficus trees, bamboo, ginger and guava that envelops Green Mountain today. We are a few minutes' drive from the sweltering lava plains, but up here it's mild and breezy.

"Whether he was right is another question. Judged by today's standards, many scientists would argue this is a disaster. On a superficial level it looks like a tropical paradise - it's humid, there's lots of plants - but if you scratch the surface it really doesn't go a lot beyond that. There's none of the complex interrelationships you'd expect in a real tropical cloud forest - and all of the species that were here are vanishing."

They comprise the few fragile grasses that grew on the island before *Homo sapiens* landed, including the tiny parsley fern, half the length of your little finger. Long thought extinct, it was rediscovered in 2009 clinging to an isolated crag on Green Mountain and after careful propagation at Kew is now being planted out into the wild again.



View from Green Mountain across volcanic cinder cones

Image caption

Hooker, to his credit, knew his planting scheme would push out the endemic ferns. What he perhaps didn't realise was just how much havoc it would cause.

"I don't think we'll ever get to the point we could call Green Mountain a fully functioning ecosystem, at least not in the short term - that would take thousands of years," says Weber.

"At the moment it's a completely unmanaged mess of invasive

species - one after another rises to dominance, others die back, those species crowd the footpaths, reducing the value of the mountain for walkers."

Things are too far gone to attempt restoration of the island's degraded environment

And the BBC didn't help. Engineers arrived in the mid-60s to construct transmitters to beam World Service programming to Africa and South America. They built a new village, a few miles inland from the sleepy capital, Georgetown - and planted a type of mesquite, known as Mexican thorn, to bind the dry soil.

Today the dry, stiff-thorned mesquite runs riot, dominating whole swathes of Ascension's terrain.

"A conservative estimate is that there's now about 38,000 of these bushes," says Weber.

"It's very difficult to control physically - it puts down tap roots that can be 20-30m deep - so we're looking at biological methods of control, bringing in pest species that are specific to this shrub from its native range."

This, alongside Weber's work on Green Mountain preserving introduced ficus trees as makeshift habitats for the struggling native ferns, pushes Ascension's oddity into new areas.

Things are too far gone to attempt restoration of the island's degraded environment. Weber's plan now is to use invasive species as part of a broader strategy, aimed at clawing back over the next century or two some of the mayhem sparked by Hooker and Darwin.

That long view is extending to the marine environment. For most of the 500 years human beings have been visiting Ascension, turtles have been dinner. Sailors would haul these beasts - which can weigh as much as 250kg - away to their ships and "turn" them, keeping them alive on their backs, sometimes for weeks, before boiling them up for soup.

This "harvesting" ended in the 1930s. But hatchlings take decades to reach maturity before returning to lay eggs on the beach of their birth. Ascension's turtle numbers only started to recover in the 1970s.

"Since then we've seen an incredible recovery in sea turtle numbers," says Ascension's Director of

Conservation Dr Nicola Weber.

"We're really just now seeing the positive effects the stopping of the harvesting has had."

In that context, being showered with sand from a turtle's careless flipper - as I was - feels like a privilege.

Costing The Earth: The Mars of the Mid-Atlantic, presented by Peter Gibbs and produced by Matthew Teller, is on BBC Radio 4 on Tuesday 19 April, at 15:30 BST. It is repeated on Wednesday 20 April at 21:00 BST. You can catch up via the BBC iPlayer.

Follow Matthew Teller on Twitter@matthewteller

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Why Mexicans Embrace Death

vivala.com

Araceli Cruz

Oct 29, 2015 05:00 PM

The Many Ways Mexicans Embrace Death and the Afterlife

Day of the Dead isn't just a holiday for Mexicans, it's a way of life



When I think of a quintessential Mexican funeral, the one I remember most was for a man I had never met. He was a distant relative and had died after he accidentally shot himself while he was with his horse up in the mountains of Jalcocotan, Mexico. Friends and family gathered at Parroquia de la Inmaculada Concepción de Maria for the

service. Then a procession commenced from the church to the cemetery that sits atop the mountains overlooking the small town. It's quite a distance on foot, and yet the young and elderly proceeded without faltering. The horse galloped alongside his owner's casket with his head hanging low. It's the only time I've ever seen an animal on the verge of tears. The town seemed to have shut down in honor of the funeral, with everyone walking along main street up to the cemetery grounds. In Jalcocotan, this happens every time someone dies.

The outpouring of emotional cries is another element of Mexican funerals I had never witnessed before. Typically, the funerals I've attended in the United States, both Latino and non-Latino, are quiet and somber. I assume the silence is out of respect. But in Mexico, the jubilant sound of a mariachi is common at a funeral service and/or burial, which sometimes makes the rush of sadness even more profound. There are also numerous days and nights of mourning, so the body isn't buried right away as it is in other cultures.

Related From Vivala: What I Miss Most About My Mexico

Countless online forums and articles aim at helping the general public cope with "the fear of death." There's even a mayor of a small town in Italy who prohibits his citizens from getting sick and dying because the population is dwindling. Yet, Mexican culture embraces death and all that comes with it.

The notion of celebrating death goes much deeper than Día de los Muertos. Although that holiday is the most recognizable way for non-Mexicans to understand how we view and

celebrate death as an important part of being alive. The Mexican customs surrounding death date back to the era of Mayans and Aztecs, and now, incorporates Catholic practices, too.



Fans of Mexican singer Jenni Rivera pay her homage after she died in a plane crash.

photo: Corbis

For example, the Mayans believed that certain deaths were more noble than others. They also had a ritual of putting maize in the mouths of the dead because maize symbolized rebirth. The Mayans also felt it was crucial that the dead find their way to the “other world.”

Human sacrifice was an important component of Aztec life. According to writer Hilary Dockray: “They believed that those who were sacrificed provided crucial nourishment to many of their deities who would in turn keep nature and the cosmos in balance.”

Related From Vivala: Going Home to the Dominican Republic With Dad

During the Spanish Conquest, Mexicans began adapting the Catholic religion. Stanley Brandes writes that All Saints' and All Souls' Days began to “assume the flavor of the contemporary event” that is recognizable today back in the 1740s, including the commercial production and sale of whimsical figurines made of the sugar paste in Mexico. He writes that these “holy days” have their roots in Catholic masses that originated in the 11th century to honor all the saints and souls that were in purgatory.

Charles Ramírez-Berg, Professor in Media Studies at The University of Texas at Austin, brought to my attention Lourdes Portillo's film *La Ofrenda/The Days of the Dead* (1989), in which the director captures how Mexicans honor the deceased.

“What she shows is the belief that death is not the end of life, but more a transition to another stage of it, a spiritual one,” Ramírez-Berg says. “In death, the living person slips from life into the spirit world.”

Day of the Dead, a Mexican holiday celebrated on October 31 through Nov. 2, has become widely accepted around the country and heavily incorporated into our American celebration of Halloween. However, in Mexico, honoring the dead is a year-round occupation. Typically, one day out of the week, loved ones will visit burial sites, clean the surrounding area and tombstone, and leave the departed's favorite foods and/or drinks. The Day of the Dead recognizes such rituals but in a more exaggerated way.

Related From Vivala: A Quick Guide on Building a Day of the Dead Altar

“This community ‘embraces’ — I would rather say that the community honors rather than

embraces — the idea of death and/or dying because it is a fact of life and it is part of the psyche, the cosmology by which people live their lives,” says Norma E. Cantú, Latino Studies Professor at University of Missouri - Kansas City.

Another way Mexicans incorporate the dead on a daily basis is by always talking about the deceased as if they're literally in the room. I've heard plenty of casual conversations around the kitchen table in which someone who is dead is talked about in the present tense. This confused me at first, but one time I whispered to my dad “didn't he die?” to which he said “yes.” It was then that I realized just because you're dead doesn't mean you're not there.

Related From Vivala: The Struggle of Not Being "Latina Enough"

“I think the Mexican response [of celebrating the dead] is remarkable, because it is not just a reminder of a loved one who has passed away, but an honoring and a maintaining of a relationship with them,” says Ramírez-Berg. “The idea of death is not morbid or macabre, it seems to me, but vibrant and alive,” Ramírez-Berg says. “The living honor the dead but treat them as if they were still present in spirit form. It's an interesting counterpoint to Western and Anglo American views of death — which is death is the end. The Mexican concept seems to me to be much more positive and not at all scary — the dead return on the Day of the Dead and we spend some time with them and they with us. The relationship is not over—it continues, maintained, and develops.”

I no longer see dying as unknown or finite end. Death is just another element to life, and one in which the community takes part in. Celebrating the dead is just the same as celebrating a birthday, perhaps even more heartfelt.

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Why the Victorians Were So Terrified of Death by Poison

Kelly Faircloth

jezebel.com

PICTORIAL

The people of the Victorian era had a very specific fear: poison murder.



This fear was driven partly by obsessive newspaper coverage of sensational poisoning cases, but as Linda Stratmann makes clear in her new history, *The Secret Poisoner*, it also played perfectly upon the anxieties of the age. Thanks to the lax regulations of the era, deadly poisons were easily available to wives, servants, even children. And did you really trust your doctor? What if

your good friend with the heavy gambling losses had taken out an insurance policy on your life?

In her book, Stratmann recaps the very public cases that created the perception there was a vast poison murder problem—as well as inspiring the occasional copycat. She also traces the development of toxicology as a science, a process often driven by fierce professional rivalries. We chatted about some of what she learned; our conversation has been lightly edited for clarity and brevity.

Why were the people of the 19th century so preoccupied with poison and with secret poisoners? You say in the book that deaths by physical violence always outnumbered deaths by poisoning.

Poison murder was very much feared, well, for several reasons. First of all, you could be murdered by your nearest and dearest. Now that was scary, you see. You might not be the sort of person who'd go out and get drunk and get into a fight, but you could still be poisoned by your cook. You could fear absolutely anybody, even people who ought to be powerless, like servants or your wife or your children. The other thing that people really feared about poison was the fact that poison attacks you from within. You can't run away from it. You can't fight back.

They often said that poison murder was the worst, the cruelest kind of murder, but it was seen as upsetting the whole framework of society. Because wives, servants, they were supposed to be powerless—people have their position in life and that didn't change. And all of a sudden, here was a powerful weapon that anybody, even children, could use. And that was very disturbing for them.

The Arsenic Century: How Victorian Britain Was Poisoned at Home, Work, and Play

by James C. Whorton

- agenttrembleKelly Faircloth

5/12/16 2:54pm

If I had to wear corsets and high collars all day, couldn't get an education, had to go to church all the time, and couldn't do anything unless a man approved it, you can bet I'd be poisoning people left and right.

- BURNTHISMUTHADOWN is owed 40 acres & a Teslaagenttremble

5/12/16 5:44pm

I try to explain to my conservative uncle - divorces are a good thing.

- Supernova: Bullshit Jediagenttremble

5/12/16 7:11pm

I'd be flashing my ankles all over town like a brazen harlot! If I was feeling particularly naughty you'd see my whole calf clothed in naught but my shoes and heavy stockings! Behold the lace trim of my bloomers!

- team buttersidedownKelly Faircloth

5/12/16 2:47pm

I really want to read about the fraudulent newspapers of the 19th century. Pundits today won't stop talking about the "divided electorate" like it's something new, but our post-war mandated to the networks in exchange for airways nightly news was unique. Before then, it was normal to have newspapers changing the facts to suit their agenda. Murdoch didn't reinvent the wheel.

Anyone know of a good book on the topic?

- goddessoftransitoryteam buttersidedown

5/12/16 4:03pm

The book I recommended above, *The Invention of Murder*, talks a great deal about the penny press and how they increased circulation with sensational stories that were pretty much made up whole cloth.

- ArcherEscaredKelly Faircloth

5/12/16 2:28pm

Is it old-timey death day on Jezebel? Because I am totally down with that.

- courtKelly Faircloth

5/12/16 2:12pm

Drugs are just the greatest

- iElvis, Hair FührerKelly Faircloth

5/12/16 2:48pm

Many newspapers were quite happy to print rumors rather than actually sticking to the truth. So what you've got then was this sudden thought—*Oh heavens, there's this terrible outbreak of poison murder.* And it probably wasn't any worse than it ever had been before, but it was just more widespread. And people became afraid that maybe the few cases that came to court, these may be just the tip of the iceberg.

The 19th century had penny newspapers; the 21st has Facebook. Beyond that, not a whole lot has changed.

- BlergKelly Faircloth

5/12/16 7:35pm

This reminds me of the spate of murders by Thalium poisoning in Australia in the 1950's. There was a big rat problem in inner city Sydney and Melbourne especially (back in those days rats would nibble at childrens faces and feet) and you could get thalium over the counter. Pretty much all notable cases were by women and thalium was known as the Inheritance powder at the time.

One case that was particularly famous, from the Daily Telegraph:



<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/post-war-days-...>

In October 1953 diminutive Caroline Grills, 63, gripped the city's attention. The sweet-faced 1.21m grandmother was accused of killing four members of her family and attempting to murder another three by adding thallium to home-made treats. A suspicious son-in-law of an intended victim, blind from a previous poisoning, noticed Grills place her hand in her dress pocket, then

put it over the cup as if dropping something into tea.

He switched the cup, poured the tea into a bottle and gave it to police. It contained a lethal dose of thallium. Thallium was found in the exhumed bodies of two of Grills's previous victims. Police found traces of thallium in the pocket of the dress Grills wore

the day she tried to give tea to the last victim. Grills spent the rest of her days at Long Bay jail where she was known by inmates as "Aunt Thally".

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Christiana Edmunds, known as the “Chocolate Cream Killer,” accused of murder by strychnine-laced chocolates. Photo via Yale University Press.

Also there was a lot of poison available, and relatively freewheeling rules about things like death certificates, right?

Yes! It wasn't until the 1850s that there was any kind of control over the sale of poisons. Anybody, even a child, could go into a shop—a grocer's shop, not even a chemist's shop—and buy enough poison to kill dozens of people. And the reason for this was that poor people needed to have cheap medicine, cheap cleaning materials, they needed means of keeping down vermin, mice and rats. If all these things were strictly controlled, they wouldn't be able to obtain them. That was the argument. It was not until well into the 20th century that there was, finally, control over things like weed killers and vermin killers.

What were the big poisons that people pictured when they thought about poison murder? Largely arsenic?

Yes, arsenic was used for murder probably more often than any other. It was very freely available, it was cheap, it was pretty much tasteless. As long as you could get it to dissolve in something, somebody could take it without realizing they'd taken any poison. So it was very useful from that point of view. That's what made it so dangerous. It was sold, initially, just as a white powder, so it could go into anything. Put it in a rice pudding, nobody would notice. And it wasn't until later in the century they said, “We've got to stop this,” and they actually used to dye it blue or whatever, so you would notice something.

Only later on, some of the more sophisticated poisons came in, like strychnine and cyanide and aconite and those things. They weren't so often used.

People became afraid that maybe the few cases that came to court, these may be just the tip of the iceberg.

Arsenic was the focus of the beginning of the toxicology field, right? The discipline that would become toxicology spent decades developing technologies to find arsenic.

Yes. Arsenic, because it was so often used, was a focus to begin with: How are you going to find arsenic in a dead body or indeed in anything that might remain—being delicate about this—from someone who had merely been unwell? But arsenic of course is a metallic poison so you could take a sample of some things, say a suspect foodstuff, and you could destroy all the organic matter and you'd be left with the arsenic. But it wasn't until about 1836 we had a really reliable way of testing for arsenic.

Then there was the *big* problem—organic poisons. You've got a suspect piece of bread or cake or something, you destroy the organic material, and you destroy the poison as well. People said, “Well, we're never going to be able to do this.” They really thought it was impossible. Then there was one very important case when somebody committed a murder using nicotine, and it was a Belgian scientist who thought, well, I really need to solve this puzzle, and he did it. That was a huge turning point in toxicology, when someone was actually

able to separate an organic poison from organic matter.

Madame Marie Lafarge, accused of poisoning her husband in 1840. Wellcome Library, London.

It was really interesting reading the book how primitive their methods were, but how far you could get doing an autopsy even then. If you took somebody's stomach apart in the right frame of time, you could find the arsenic.

The thing that scares me when I read about the autopsy reports—and it's obvious when you read the account of it—the doctors are doing this just with their bare hands. Which would be unthinkable nowadays, incredibly dangerous. They would say, "Oh yes, I put my fingers into the stomach contents," and you go, *Oh my heavens*.

It was quite primitive by our standards, although forensic toxicology as we know it really had its origins at the beginning of the 19th century with the French toxicologist—well, he was actually Spanish—Orfila. He produced this wonderful two-volume book, and that really was the launch of the modern study of toxicology, and people built on that work over the century. Not that he couldn't be wrong occasionally, but it was very much more scientific and less superstitious than it had been in the previous century.

It was also interesting in that there was clearly no sense of the chain of evidence. In your book, you give instances of murderers actually attending the autopsies of their victims.

Exactly! If you were a doctor and you had murdered somebody, then you could actually take part in the autopsy on your own victim, and if you were really lucky, you could nudge something and spill the evidence, or try and get rid of the samples. It was rather strange.

The chain of evidence, some of the ways the samples were handled, they just wouldn't be allowed in a court nowadays, because they'd gone through so many hands. There was one case where a policeman had taken charge of a packet of arsenic, went to the pub, had a few drinks, and was passing it around all the other people and showing it to them.

What role did the penny press or the press in general play in all this?

I think the press was actually very important. At the beginning of the century, you didn't have the penny newspaper. Then gradually newsprint became cheaper, you had more newspapers printed, you had them distributed, you had better adult literacy, and of course sensational cases sold newspapers. Many newspapers were quite happy to print rumors rather than actually sticking to the truth. So what you've got then was this sudden thought—*Oh heavens, there's this terrible outbreak of poison murder*. And it probably wasn't any worse than it ever had been before, but it was just more widespread. And people became afraid that maybe the few cases that came to court, these may be just the tip of the iceberg. Because there were so many deaths that, it was very hard to attribute a cause of death. And so people thought that poison murder was much more common than it actually was.

If you were a doctor and you had murdered somebody, then you could actually take part in the autopsy on your own victim.

You mention the idea in the book of a moral panic about poison murder.

Absolutely. I mean this happened in little villages in Essex. There was one or two murder cases, and the rumor started to spread that actually, there was almost this poisoning industry going on in all these little villages in Essex, that women were known poisoners and you'd go to them for advice and they'd tell you how to get rid of your awful husband. And in the end, there were actually very few prosecutions, but there were rumors that it was just rife. And it was, I think, rather overdone.

It did have a function, because as a result of this panic over what was happening there, particularly with arsenic, there were questions asked in Parliament and legislation was brought in to control the sale of arsenic, at long last.

They probably accidentally helped with the problem of accidental poisoning.

There was a lot of accidental poisoning. I don't deal with it very much in the book, but certainly you'd get a packet of something, this white powder, and people would think oh it's salt or baking powder or something, and their whole family would be poisoned, because it was actually arsenic and it wasn't labeled.

You mention the fear that there were these local women telling women how to murder their awful husband. Part of what's going on here is the fear that these supposed-to-be-dependents, women, children, servants, could kill you at your dinner table—but it seems like at the same time there's this recognition that women have awful husbands and there's nothing they can do about it.

Yes, there was substantial amounts of dreadful domestic violence at this time, and really the courts didn't do very much about it. You do occasionally see cases coming to court, but so much just went unreported and tolerated.

Up until about the middle of the century, the usual perception of the poisoner was that it was a woman from the laboring classes, she wouldn't be terribly well educated, she would kill her husband or she might kill other relatives if she'd insured them first, and she was using arsenic. That was the popular picture of what the murderer was. Then later on in the century, you suddenly got some very high-profile cases where this concept of the educated middle-class male poisoner who killed for inheritance or things like that [came in], and he was using rather more scientific methods. That was just the public perception, and there's some truth in both of those.

That's a very stark shift—it's almost like a shift from Regency cartoons to Sherlock Holmes. What drove that shift?

The infamous Dr. William Palmer. Via Getty.

What was behind it was a number of very high-profile cases that were all over the

newspapers in the 1850s. Again, newspapers driving public perception.

I think people know a lot about William Palmer, who was a doctor and insured people and murdered them, used strychnine quite a lot. He had gambling debts he had to face. And so here you have a medical doctor who's hanged for murder, which was quite shocking really. The doctor was someone of status who you were supposed to trust.

And then there were other cases—people perceived strychnine as something that you could use and they tried to copy Palmer. Not usually with any success from the point of view of getting away with it.

It's so news-driven. We don't think of this happening in the 19th century, but there were many newspapers and they were widely read.

Were there any cases that stood out to you as very prototypical or especially remarkable?

If I had to pick one case out of this that I found the most fascinating, it was one I hadn't really come across before: the Great Burdon slow poisoning case, which has so many interesting features of the classic Victorian crime. You've got the husband tried for the murder of his wife, but she died slowly over two months and the arsenic was given to her in an enema. Very, very unusual—not completely unknown, but very unusual. And he was acquitted, and nobody was ever actually successfully condemned for that crime.

Now, I've reexamined some of the facts in that case, and I think that the prosecution was, shall we say, a bit blinkered. Looking at it with a more modern eye, I think I know who the culprit was. Her three medical attendants suspected that she was being poisoned, and because of their professional status, didn't dare tell anybody, and they didn't have tests done until far too late. By the time they'd established that she'd been poisoned with arsenic, she was dead. Took her two months to die. There was quite a lot of uproar over that. It's a really, really interesting case that I think ought to be better known about.

So you don't think the husband did it?

No, I don't think the husband did it.

Who do you think did it?

Ah, you have to read the book to find out!

I guess it could be any number of people, right? That's the thing about poison murder!

Well, yes, this is the whole thing. It's very rare with a poison murder that somebody actually sees somebody administering the poison. It very occasionally happens, but usually it's done when no one else is around. It could have been maybe half a dozen other people might have had access to whatever it was that carried the poison. And that's why in so many of the cases people were acquitted, even though with the surrounding circumstances you think *Oh, I'm pretty sure they're guilty*. But it couldn't be proved in court, and they gave them the benefit of

the doubt.

The book challenged some of my stereotypes about Victorian law courts—that idea everybody was sent to the gallows or transported. It seems like from your book a lot of times juries would ask for mercy or clemency.

What was interesting was that, when a woman had committed a murder and it was obvious that she was in terrible distress—there was one woman who'd been not only abandoned by the man she was living with, but he'd turned up one day when she was out, took all her furniture and everything, and just went off with it, and she came back to a completely empty house and was left totally destitute. People could see that this a woman in total desperation. And so unfortunately she gave laudanum to her child and took it herself, but she pulled through. But the courts realized this was not a hard-hearted killer, this was a woman driven to the edge of despair. So they were actually quite lenient on her. And there are cases like that.

On the other hand, there's cases of other people killing in cold blood, who are villains of the deepest dye as far as I'm concerned!

Coverage of one poisoning case, circa 1886. Photo courtesy Yale University Press.

When did this age of the poison murder panic end, and why?

It came to a close really about the end of the 19th century. By that time we had proper death certificates, we had doctors legally that were required to provide a cause of death. You had better autopsy methods, better toxicology and so on, so you could actually get to the cause of death a lot better. And then statistics were provided which showed that actually the numbers of poison murders were far less than was actually believed. If you haven't got the information, it's easy to panic and think, *Oh, this is a terrible danger*. But it actually wasn't as bad as people thought.

Well that's a relief.

Yes. Well, we still do get poison cases today, but they're far rarer.

<https://www.amazon.com/Secret-Poisone...>

The Secret Poisoner: A Century of Murder

Photos courtesy Yale University Press; via Wellcome Library, London, and Getty Images.

106 replies

The following replies are approved. To see additional replies that are pending approval, click Show Pending. Warning: These may contain graphic material.

- TheBurnersMyDestinationKelly Faircloth
5/12/16 2:17pm

Turns out having "being a widow" being the only way women could get any power didn't really encourage women to keep their husbands around...

• goddessoftransitoryTheBurnersMyDestination
5/12/16 2:27pm

I love the fear of the updated "local wise woman"—how instead of love potion herbs or something to "restore the menses" she's just flat out telling you how to off your horrible spouse and not get caught. Why would this be so terrifying if everybody was so happy and pleased with their lot in life, I wonder?

• team buttersidedowngoddessoftransitory
5/12/16 2:43pm

The updated witch hunt.

• agenttrembleTheBurnersMyDestination
5/12/16 2:52pm

Except being a widow wouldn't necessarily make you any freer, because you probably wouldn't inherit from your husband, because women are only useful for producing male heirs, so you'd probably have to remarry right away just to avoid starving! Or become a nun. Or a governess.

• TheBurnersMyDestinationagenttremble
5/12/16 3:15pm

If you had a young son you just bought yourself 18+/- years of freedom, though. You could always count on dying of consumption after that ;)

• goddessoftransitoryKelly Faircloth
5/12/16 2:24pm

Well, considering people really *were* being poisoned by just about everything—their clothing, their drinking vessels, their heating systems, their lighting, their cosmetics, their freaking wallpaper—it seems like a pretty logical extension to fear that somebody's going to hurry up the job.

• Tigress Euphrateasegoddessoftransitory
5/12/16 3:48pm

There is a wonderful little series (available for free with Prime!) all about common household killers of the Victorian and Edwardian eras. It's only 2 or 3 episodes, so it's easy to binge watch. It was like EVERYTHING was intended to kill people—even the freaking slope of victorian staircases. It's fascinating, and also terrifying. Edwardians used to die by electrocution bc ppl didnt understand things like insulation and conduction so they had live wires hanging from the ceiling for Tiny Tim to gnaw on! Gah!

- Surfboard2121Tigress Euphratease

5/12/16 4:22pm

I live in an old London house and we have those staircases and aren't allowed to change them due to planning laws. Sooo dangerous however everytime I stumble and nearly trip down the stairs I give myself a little smile and remember the history.

- Cestrumnocturn1goddessofttransitory

5/12/16 4:36pm

They were like people today who are afraid of 'toxins' and 'chemicals'. Only their fears had more of a basis in reality.

- MissPooslie7Tigress Euphratease

5/12/16 4:36pm

there's a BBC series on the Youtubes as well. it has victorian, edwardian, and tudor. my favorite guy on it is Nathan Gross. he gets like so excited talking aobut how dangerous these houses were. also he is wearing like an outdoors windbreaker jacket in his interviews like, dude, take off your coat and stay awhile!

- ISpeakJiveKelly Faircloth

5/12/16 2:24pm

"...there was one woman who'd been not only abandoned by the man she was living with, but he'd turned up one day when she was out, took all her furniture and everything, and just went off with it, and she came back to a completely empty house and was left totally destitute..."



- agenttrembleISpeakJive

5/12/16 2:49pm

The end of that story is like Charles Dickens crossed with Emily Brontë. Grim af.

- ISpeakJiveagenttremble

5/12/16 3:13pm

For real. So fucking upsetting.

On a lighter note, if this happened today, it would probably just end up on Judge Judy.

"What do you mean you showed up and cleared her stuff out? What's wrong with you?"



• BlucattelSpeakJive
5/12/16 3:21pm

Yeah. My grandmother had her furniture seized, in about 1934, because although my grandfather had abandoned her and my father, and was actually living on the other side of the country, he had run up debts.

• agenttremblelSpeakJive
5/12/16 3:28pm

I actually know someone this happened to, except it was their dealer, not their ex, and no one got poisoned (except metaphorically-ish by drugs and debt). The police were not very sympathetic.

• Mr. FischoederKelly Faircloth
5/12/16 2:22pm

Found my next morbid beach read! This sounds like a fascinating prequel to *The Poisoner's Handbook* (all about poison and prohibition in the 1920s) which I cannot recommend highly enough.

• goddessoftransitoryMr. Fischoeder
5/12/16 2:25pm

Also highly recommended:

<http://www.amazon.com/Invention-Murd...>

• Mr. Fischoedergoddessoftransitory
5/12/16 2:29pm

Dang, the morbid beach read list keeps growing!

• AzuraBronwynMr. Fischoeder
5/12/16 2:41pm

I was hoping someone would mention *The Poisoner's Handbook*. It's a fascinating read.

7

Reply

Flagged

• MsMymlanMr. Fischoeder
5/12/16 2:47pm

Accused of witchcraft, grandmother given eviction notice

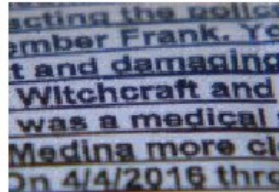
news4sanantonio.com



By Andrew Lofholm, News4
Tuesday, May 3rd 2016
Picture of eviction notice.



gma witchcraft eviction.jpg



witchcraft eviction.jpg

SAN ANTONIO-For eight years now, 77-year-old Ester Medina has lived at the Candleridge Apartments

Her granddaughter Corrina, and daughters, Nancy and Yesenia, say she's a practicing Christian that doesn't have a mean bone in her osteoporotic body.

"My mother wouldn't hurt anyone," Yesenia says.

Her apartment complex says she can't live here anymore,

"I have not heard her say he's a vampire," she says, referencing the eviction notice that spells out how she "threatened the health, safety or right to the peaceful enjoyment of the property of a maintenance worker named Frank."

Corrina reads the letter aloud for us, "You accused Frank of being vampire and entering your unit and damaging or removing items from your apartment."

To which Castleridge management responded, again as read by Corrina, "Ms. Medina was practicing witchcraft and delusional."

That was back in late October. Police were called and did note it's possible she was hallucinating. Her daughters attribute it to the medicine she was on.

"We did change her medication."

And then on April 4th, the notice outlines a similar incident happening, and on April 19th this letter came, telling her it was time to leave.

The 77-year-old has to bring her alleged witchcraft elsewhere.

"It was the most pathetic thing they can do," Yesenia says.

We asked management on the property for some more information,

"I can't make a comment," says Prisilla, a woman who identifies herself as the manager.

And on the phone to their main office in round rock, they too said they couldn't comment.

Nancy sums up the accusations as, "To me, I take it like they want to get her out of the apartment."

Both sides said they are prepared to settle this in court if it goes that far.

by Andrew Lofholm, Reporter

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Zimbabwean Flag (Mr. Zimbabwe)

Two elderly women suspected to be witches have died after they were forced to drink holy water.

The two elderly Zimbabwean women died after **Joshua Bhebhe** and his cousin **Edica Mutero** from Gokwe forced their mothers **Erita Bhebhe**, 76, and **Jessy Mutero**, age unknown, to attend a church service. There they were made to drink the water which reportedly caused the death.

According to Zimbabwean media house, **B-Metro**, soon after drinking the water and holding the prophet's "holy" stick, they collapsed and died at Baba Wechishanu Wenguwo Tsvuku Church.

Prophet Pira, the church leader and custodian had initially said if the women drank the water they would die if they were witches but live if they were not.

The two boys who forced the women to the church were caught after they both gave similar stories of their mothers' deaths, raising the suspicion of family members.

"Joshua and Edica tried to cover up the issue after realising that their mothers died at church. They took them home leaving each one of them in her kitchen hut," said a family source.

"The grandchildren, realising that there was something wrong, told neighbours who then confirmed them dead and alerted other family members.

"The other children, hearing what had transpired prior to their mothers' deaths reported the matter to the police and their corpses were taken for post-mortem in Bulawayo.

The results revealed that the two women died of poisoning," added the family source.

The two boys confessed the crime to the police after they were arrested.

"Joshua and Edica were picked up by police for questioning and they revealed that their mothers died after drinking water which was given to them by Prophet Pira," the source added.

It is reported that Prophet Pira fled to an unknown place when he heard of the police arrest.

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Wolverine shot in North Dakota came from Wyoming, its radio transmitter...

on May 10, 2016

grandforksherald.com



Wolverine shot in North Dakota came from Wyoming, its radio transmitter shows

http://www.grandforksherald.com/sites/default/files/styles/square_300/public/field/image/Wolverine1_3.jpg?itok=UA1Rjooq

Herald Staff Report

Grand Forks Herald <http://www.grandforksherald.com>

Wolverine shot in North Dakota came from Wyoming, its radio transmitter shows

Grand Forks North Dakota 375 2nd Ave. N. 58203

ALEXANDER, N.D. -- A wolverine shot late last month by a ranch hand in western North Dakota came from Wyoming, where a radio transmitter had been implanted in 2008 after the animal was captured south of Yellowstone National Park.

Researchers often implant such transmitters in mammals that frequently crawl in and out of burrows or that live in water.

According to the North Dakota Game and Fish Department, the wolverine's last known location was in Colorado in 2012. After that, the battery in the transmitting device likely ran out of juice.

When a ranch hand shot the wolverine south of Alexander in McKenzie County, it was about 700 miles from where it last was sighted.

Records from the tracking device shed light on the wolverine's travels.

"In some ways, it's a little mind-blowing that they can travel that far," Bob Inman, a wolverine biologist with the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, told the Casper (Wyo.) Star Tribune. "But that's what we're learning is possible."

Inman implanted the transmitter, the Star Tribune reported.

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department investigated the shooting of the wolverine and determined the rancher was within state law to kill the animal, which reportedly was harassing livestock. North Dakota law allows a landowner, tenant or the person's agent to kill any wild fur-bearing animal -- except bears -- to protect poultry, domestic animals or crops.

Stephanie Tucker, furbearer biologist for Game and Fish, found the transmitter, which was implanted in the abdomen, while conducting a necropsy test on the wolverine. The male, estimated to be 8 to 9 years old, appeared to be healthy.

"It's unique, there's no doubt about that," Jeb Williams, wildlife chief for Game and Fish in Bismarck, told the Herald. "And then for them to see the history attached with it. ... A wolverine in North Dakota is pretty darn significant and neat. We've had some reports and sightings in the past, but to have them confirmed and to have the transmitter associated with the history it provides is really cool for people to see."

Before finding the transmitter, Game and Fish had planned to conduct genetic tests in an attempt to learn more about the wolverine's origins. Getting results would have taken months, Williams said, but such tests no longer are necessary.

The last confirmed record of a wolverine in North Dakota was from the fur-trading era in the mid-1800s, but the animals have been known to travel long distances. Minnesota hasn't had a confirmed wolverine since 1899, but unconfirmed sightings have been reported as recently as last fall in northwest Minnesota.

The closest population of wolverines in North Dakota occurs in the mountains of Montana and the forests of northern Canada, but male wolverines are known to travel great distances in search of habitat, food and/or other wolverines.

"This guy definitely took the scenic route," Williams said of the wolverine. "I think it's a bit of a surprise, but one of the things -- say with lions in North Dakota now, too -- is a person can never say never anymore.

"At one point in time, when someone reported a lion sighting, you might question that, and now anymore you just don't," he added. "But for a wolverine to show up in North Dakota under these circumstances, it definitely caught a few people by surprise."

Game and Fish plans to have a taxidermist make a full body mount of the wolverine, which will be on display in the department's Bismarck headquarters.

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"A little embarrassed:" Woman follows car's GPS straight into Lake Huron

fox6now.com

FOX6Now.com

"A little embarrassed:" Woman follows car's GPS straight into Lake Huron

Posted 5:06 pm, May 13, 2016, by Tribune Media Wire Service, Updated at 05:37pm, May 13, 2016

TOBERMORY, Ont. – A woman trying to navigate a foggy night in Ontario ended up driving straight into Lake Huron Thursday, according to police.

The 23-year-old Kitchener, Ontario, resident was following her car's GPS when she somehow lost her way at the Little Tub Harbour boat launch. It was after midnight when she took the fateful turn, and suddenly felt her red Toyota Yaris filling with sub-40 degree water as it sank.



A driver following her car's GPS took a wrong turn into Little Tub Harbour in Ontario, but managed to swim back to shore before the vehicle sank. (Bruce Peninsula OPP)

Thinking quickly, the woman managed to roll down the windows before the vehicle disappeared below the surface, and swam to shore.

"How the launch works, it's not an airborne thing. It's not 'Dukes of Hazzard.' It kind of goes off the road and the launch just drops all of a sudden," Const. Katrina Rubinstein-Gilbert told the Canadian Press. "So she would have been driving on the road, and then all of a sudden just dropped and hit water."

Officials sent out a warning to all boats to avoid the area, and news of the woman's embarrassing navigation error spread quickly – police the Ministry of the Environment and officers from the Joint Rescue Coordination Center rushed to the scene.

Rubinstein-Gilbert said the driver was "a little embarrassed," but generally in good spirits.

Apparently, no alcohol was involved in the incident and the driver will not be charged.

7 comments

- **walloffthenorthside**

Old or Asian?

May 14, 2016 at 3:48 am

- That immediately what I wondered too after I saw "women" in the title.

May 14, 2016 at 10:44 am

- Young white

May 15, 2016 at 7:46 pm

- Drives a Yaris. More likely a Bernie supporter.

May 14, 2016 at 3:49 am

- jcb_cummings

Well, she was a Canadian woman, so I don't think she gives a hoot about American Politics.

May 14, 2016 at 8:05 pm

- Great I Salute You...

May 14, 2016 at 4:08 am

- gail

this is literally in an episode of the office <https://vimeo.com/15390422>

May 14, 2016 at 4:23 pm

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Tribeca Woman Uses Strobe Light, Disco Ball To Wage War On Neighbor's TV

gothamist.com

Tribeca Woman Uses Strobe Light, Disco Ball To Wage War On Neighbor's TV

by Scott Heins in News on May 17, 2016 9:58 am



051716MurrayTribecaCondo.jpg

9 Murray Street, where both Epstein and Miele reside (image via Google Maps)

Angered by a bright flatscreen television, a Tribeca woman has been shining bright strobe lights and a nightclub-style disco ball into her neighbor's apartment, according to a lawsuit filed in Manhattan Civil Court. The passive-aggressive tactics started shortly after her new neighbor moved into the building in December 2014.

Suellen Epstein is accused of waging a "campaign of harassment" against Rich Miele and his family. Miele's lawsuit claims that Epstein was upset by the glare caused by his big-screen television, and "demanded" he close his blinds when it was in use. Miele instead offered to pay for high-tech blinds to be installed in Epstein's apartment—an offer that she refused.

According to court papers, what followed was an all-out illuminated assault. Miele claims that Epstein installed "a series of large extra-bright spotlights against her windows" and shone them across their building's shaftway directly into his apartment. "The spotlights cause my entire living room to spectacularly fill up with bright light every single night," Miele wrote.

Miele went on to claim that Epstein went so far as to install timers on the spotlights, so that they would shine blinding light into his home even when she was away on vacation. As the dispute progressed, Epstein also unleashed "nightclub-like" strobes and spinning colored lights, the suit alleges. Zachary Kozak, Miele's attorney, told the Post that the blinding lights are kept on as late as 3 a.m.

One of Epstein's weaponized lights is positioned to light up a hallway leading to Miele's bathroom, he claims, exposing his two young children before and after their nightly baths. "There have been times when my daughter, being a three year old child, will emerge while still inside the bathroom in the doorway without any clothing after taking a bath... and be exposed to anyone looking into the windows, including [Epstein] as a direct result of the shining spotlights into my bathroom," Miele claims.

The civil suit demands that Epstein, who has run Tribeca gymnastics company Children's Tumbling for decades, shut off and remove the lights. The Post reports that Miele already

won a temporary victory in the matter after a Manhattan judge blocked Epstein from using the various lights until a June hearing settles the matter.

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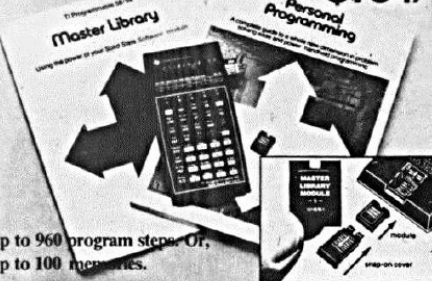


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Memory number				Arithmetic		
Maximum number of steps	960	124	224	Relative	*	*
Expandable	*	*	*	Indirect	*	*
Memory type				Label	*	*
- fully merged	*	*	*	Direct	*	*
- partially merged	*	*	*			
Base data sources				Label addressing		
- Number of bases	5,033			- No. of address	15	10
- Program does not store data	*	*	*	- No. of labels	7F	20
- Identifies all instructions to program	*	*	*			
- program memory size	*	*	*	Memory control keys		
- Lowest or maximum program	*	*	*	- STOP	*	*
				- GOTO	*	*
Data memory				- Clear register	*	*
- Memory number of registers	136	70	70	- Program (step/data memory) register(s)	*	*
- Expandable	*	*	*			
- Addressing				MAGNETIC DISK		
- absolute	*	*	*	- Capacity per step/program	400	224
- indirect	66	*	*	- Density	50	28
- abs. ind. of index registers	66	*	*			
- absolute form	66	*	*	Read/write (step/data) keys		
- EBCDIC	*	*	*	- Read/write with append	*	*
- Lowest or maximum program	*	*	*			
PROGRAMMING				PRINTING		
- Program edit (EDIT/DEL) allowed	*	*	*	- Print data only, not steps	***	***
- Memory edit (EDIT) allowed	*	*	*	- Print steps	*	*
Module/Control				OPERATING SYSTEM		
- Conditional branching	*	*	*	- Entry system	AOS	SP4
- Numeric comparisons	*	*	*	- No. of pending operations	*	1004
- $A < B$, $A = B$, $A > B$	*	*	*	- No. of sets of parentheses	*	*
- $A < B$, $A = B$, $A > B$ (negative)	*	*	*	- No. of sets of square brackets	*	*
- Independent comparisons (in registers)	*	*	*	FUNCTIONS		
- Flags (operand comparison)	*	*	*	- Sine, log, exp, inv, sinh, cosh	*	*
- Number of flags	10	*	*	- Inverse, trigonometric, absolute value	*	*
- Total one operand (or more) entry	*	*	*	- Linear regression, trend line, correlation coefficient	*	*
Loop control				DISPLAY FORMAT		
- Incremental (sequential) (branch on zero)	*	*	*	- YES/NO characters	9F-10	10F-13
- Branch on increment	*	*	*	- Scientific notation	*	*
- Branch on step number	*	*	*	- Engineering notation	*	*
- Branch on step number (negative)	*	*	*	DISPLAYING CHARACTERISTICS		
- No. of index registers (indirect address)	136	*	*	- Internal digits	13	12
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A DISTRICT court was yesterday faced with a poser on what constitutes a valid Chinese customary marriage.

According to Mr Tan Ee Leong of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said to be an authority on the subject, parents' consent will decide on the validity.

The acceptance of tea during a tea ceremony is one way of showing their consent, said Mr Taa, who testified for the prosecution at the trial of businessman Ng Tat Khay who is accused of committing bigamy on

45, was alleged to have married Madam Lim Yeok Lan when his wife, Madam Lim Bee Kow, with whom he was supposed to have married according to Chinese customary rites in 1961, is still alive.

Mr. Tann Wee Tiong, for Ng, contended there was no valid marriage between Ng and Madam Lim Bee Kow because the tea ceremony was never performed at the man's house at the time and did not approve of the marriage.

He himself witnesses and used

MADAM LIM BEE KOW
Wife No. 1

MADAM LIM YEOK LAN
Wife

Supt. H. Mirza

[illegible]

separated from his wife for seven continuous years.

Mr Tan said his client's commission was to advise the court "in the law in that he had not heard from her for more than seven years."

He said that under that under this section of law, "not heard from the spouse for more than seven years" meant that the spouse must be presumed to be dead.

Madam Lim Hee Koo testified that she was

Mr Tan Ee Leong then testified that when a couple worshipped their ancestral tablets, God and then offered prayers to their ancestors, paravits, the marriage is valid.

The court then asked whether a marriage is considered void if the tea ceremony and worshiping is performed only in the girl's home.

Mr Tan replied that the ceremony in this case is not

he had been in contact with her for the past seven years. He had four children with her. She said that the Registry of Marriages had entered his name as the husband of Madam Lim because Madam Lim had identified herself with him at a wedding ceremony.

Concluded

testified that she was married to a Chinese man known as the Chinese cousin when she was 13.

She also showed a photograph of herself and Ng, which she said was taken before she was married. Both were dressed in their wedding attire.

She said that they arrived to at their respective parents at their respective homes when she was seven children by him.

After the birth of the child, she said that she left him because he got into a fight with a man.

Madam Lim testified that her marriage to her husband was a common-law marriage. She was separated from him when she was 13.

She also testified that she was married to a Chinese man known as the Chinese cousin when she was 13.

She also showed a photograph of herself and Ng, which she said was taken before she was married. Both were dressed in their wedding attire.

She said that they arrived to at their respective parents at their respective homes when she was seven children by him.

After the birth of the child, she said that she left him because he got into a fight with a man.



MADAM LIM YEOK LAN



MADAM T

DENIAL of a job will block a drug addict's recovery to normal life, according to Mr. K. S. Rajah, director of Legal Aid and vice-president of the Singapore Anti-Narcotics Association (Sana).

Mr Rajan, who appeared in a documentary, The Road Back, telecast by Radio and Television Singapore on Wednesday night,

He will prefer the job he had been doing because he is going back to an environment in which he has been a

But unfortunately, there have been many cases when his old job has been filled up or the employer refuses to take him back.

Mr. Rajah said: "There are certain factors that are conjured in the employer's mind about drug addicts and this results in the person not being taken back."

"This poses a problem for the drug addict because he has no normal life in every respect. He may have taken a permanent with drugs for kicks, or for some equality

thing. Again, you deny him a job."

Had no pass

A YOUTH, Teh Yoke Bee, 35, was jailed a day and fined \$50 by a magistrate yesterday when he pleaded guilty to a charge of entering Singapore without a valid pass in October last year.

“This poses a problem for the drug addict because he is normal in every respect. He may have taken or experimented with drugs for kicks or for some equally

Interest plus the convenience
of over 85 On-Line offices
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THE Singapore Labour Foundation's second mammoth lucky draw scheduled for May 17 has now been postponed to July 14.

This performance is due in part to a series of seminars for delegates to the May 1947 and the National Trade Union Congress for delegates' conference next month.

Of the two million tickets printed, about half have been sold.

At the last draw, \$1.5 million worth of tickets were sold and all the top three prizes of hundred thousand dollars.

The dispute over the winner of the top prize of a \$100,000 farm house has also been settled.

Understanding of Science.

By Professor N. Kodagoda of the Department of Forensic Medicine, University of Colombo, is supported by most of the other 30 delegates from 16 countries.

Describing it as one of the most important recommendations made at the three-day seminar, the scientific secretary of the Colombo Science and Technology in Developing Countries (Costed), Dr. A. S. Samarasinghe, said:

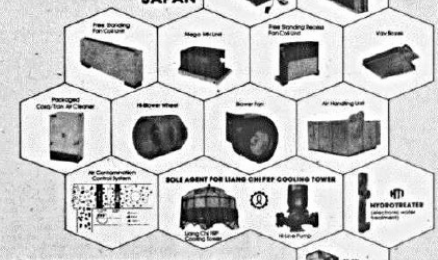
"Costed will initiate such

AN Asian Association of Science Communicators
to be formed to promote better public understand-
ing of science in Asia.

This follows a proposal made yesterday by a Sri Lankan delegate on the third and final day of the seminar on Techniques for Promotion of Public Under-

[illegible]

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The proposed association, said Prof Kodagoda, will comprise scientists and people in mass communication. It will serve as a forum for sharing experiences and exchanging new ideas.

draw is also a two-story, five-bedroom semi-detached house worth \$155,000 in Apple Garden, off Chagall Lane, plus \$15,000.

The second prize is a three-bedroom, \$117,000 apartment in Mar Thoma Road in St Michael's Estate

It will also:

- DEVELOP a pool of scientific writers to evaluate materials for the public to help them choose their living conditions;
- ORGANISE exchange programmes;
- IDENTIFY and train new talents; and
- ACT as a representative body to government and other organisations of science professions and scientific matters.

BEDOK community centre will organise a trade fair at the Bedok North Road vacant land in aid of its building fund from May 26 to June 26.

ABOUT 30 students of Woodsville Secondary School were hit by mass hysteria on Tuesday at about noon.

The affected students, of Secondary One and Two, were believed to have been sent to hospital for observation, while their unaffected classmates were asked to leave the school early.

A spokesman of the school confirmed the mass hysteria, but declined to give details.

A spokesman of the school confirmed the mass hysteria, but declined to give details.

Is Yellowstone National Park In Danger Of Being 'Loved To Death'?

April 18, 2016

npr.org



Almost like clockwork, every 60 to 110 minutes, Old Faithful shoots out a jet of steam and hot water up to 184 feet high. In summer the nearby parking lot fills and empties at about the same pace. Yellowstone Superintendent Dan Wenk says, "One of the great fears of every superintendent of Yellowstone is that Old Faithful will stop erupting when they're superintendent."



- The colors of Yellowstone's Grand Prismatic Spring come from microbes called thermophiles, which thrive in scalding water. The green is chlorophyll the thermophiles use to absorb sunlight.
- A grizzly bear fends off ravens from a bison carcass in Grand Teton National Park.
- Park Service biologist Doug Smith races toward a gray wolf that he shot from the air with a

tranquilizer dart. Before it awakens, he'll give it a quick physical exam and fit it with a radio collar. Wolves are now thriving in Yellowstone, but researchers monitor them closely.

- Yellowstone bison set the pace of traffic over the Highway 89 bridge in Gardiner, Mont., on the park's northern border. Winter pushes the bison out of the park to lower elevations in search of food, a migration that comes into conflict with agriculture and development.
- What wilderness means to people has steadily changed since Yellowstone was founded. The Park Service no longer tries to make tame spectacles of wild animals. But today, as in 1972 when this photo was taken, most visitors to the park never get far from the road and a black bear is still a reason to pull over.



- A lone member of the Phantom Springs wolf pack stands tall in Grand Teton National Park.
- A state wildlife manager in Cody, Wyo., checks on a problem grizzly that's been tranquilized so it can be relocated away from people. Wyoming and other states around Yellowstone argue that grizzlies have recovered enough for trophy hunting to be allowed.



Yellowstone National Park, a wilderness recreation area stretching for nearly 3,500 square miles atop a volcanic hot spot in Wyoming and parts of Montana and Idaho, may be in trouble.

Each year, Yellowstone attracts millions of visitors and provides a home to countless animal species, including the once-threatened grizzly bear and bison. But finding the right balance between tourism and preservation can be tricky.

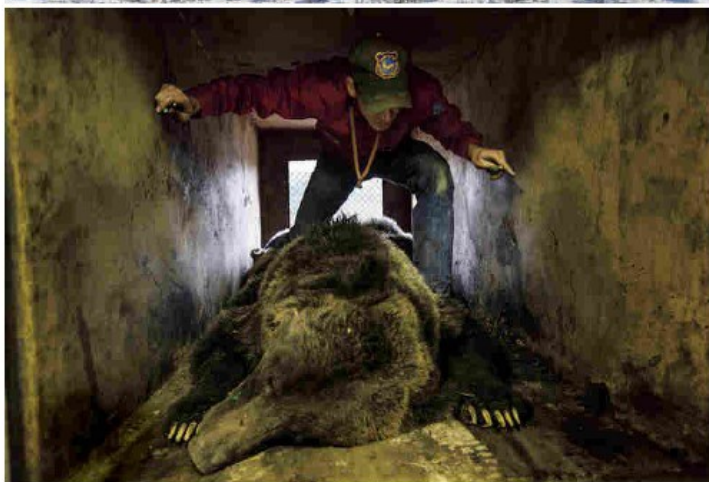
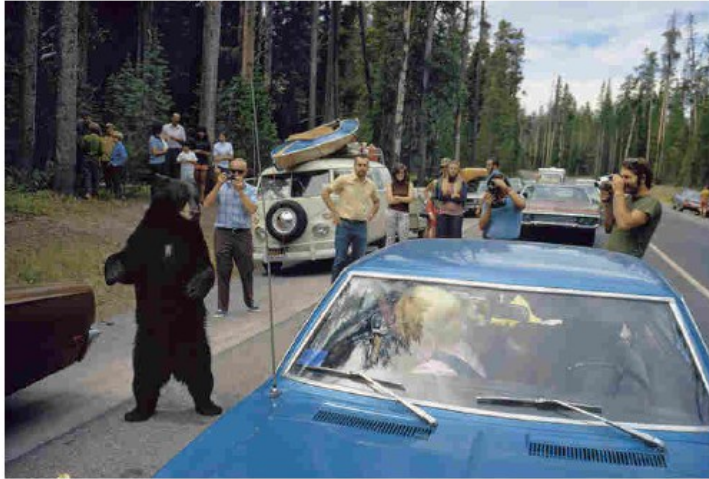


Journalist David Quammen, who writes about the park in the May issue of *National Geographic*, warns *Fresh Air*'s Terry Gross that "there are ways in which Yellowstone is in danger of being loved to death."

Quammen says that so many tourists visit Yellowstone — close to 4 million each year — that it's

stressing the park's ecosystem. But, he adds, the development of private lands around the park is an even greater threat.

"[People] come and they buy a lot in a new subdivision, or they buy a ranchette, or they buy 100 acres or 300 acres, and they put up a cabin and they get a road and they get a satellite dish, and they get a dog and they turn what was wild landscape into human-occupied landscape," Quammen says. "And that's problematic for the bear, that's problematic for the



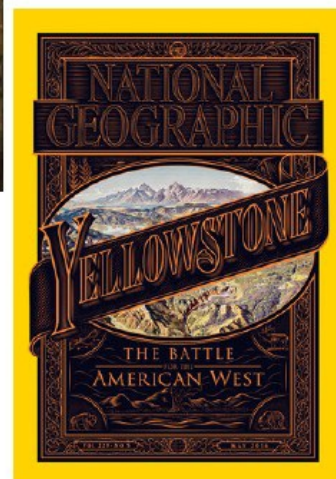
elk that migrate through these corridors."

Quammen notes that Yellowstone National Park is just one part of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, a 22 million-acre area that also includes Grand Teton National Park, a portion of the Wind River Indian Reservation and other private and federally owned lands. Because the animals in Yellowstone need to migrate outside the park in the winter, the lands in the greater ecosystem play an important role in the park's continued existence.

"It has been realized in recent decades that Yellowstone Park is not an island, Quammen says. "It's part of this larger system, this larger body of wild landscape, and it needs the rest of this wild landscape just as the rest of the wild landscape needs it."

Interview Highlights

On the interdependence of all the lands within the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem



*National Geographic hide
caption toggle caption National
Geographic Journalist David
Quammen writes about the
history of Yellowstone National
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National Geographic*

Journalist David Quammen writes about the history of Yellowstone National Park and the conflicts in the greater Yellowstone ecosystem in the May issue of *National Geographic* magazine.

There are animals that are moving across boundaries. The great elk migrations, for instance, move in and out of Yellowstone National Park seasonally. Pronghorn move in and out of Grand Teton National Park. Grizzly bears move across the boundaries. All of these factors are interconnected. All of these species and processes are interconnected in this great ecosystem.

It's very important, we argue, we think, to the American public, to American history, to modern America, that there is this huge intact, contiguous ecosystem in the heart of the American West, within which live, for instance, all the original big predator species. ... The grizzly bear, the black bear, the wolf, the mountain lion, the coyote — they're all there, interacting with their prey species, interacting with the landscape. It's part of what makes the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem so special.

On wanting Yellowstone to be wild, but also safe for people to visit

I call it the paradox of the cultivated wild. It's paradoxical because we're taking a place and we're saying, "We want this place to continue to be wild, but in order for it to seem wild, to appear wild, to give people the experience of what the wild in the Northern Rockies is, we've got to do some tinkering, we've got to do some management. We have to have some rules and some boundaries." And that goes back to the beginning.

The founding of Yellowstone National Park back in 1872 — it was founded originally because it was a great tourist destination for people who wanted to see geysers and canyons. And then gradually we realized that part of the value of this place, part of the importance of this

place, was as a great wildlife refuge. So how do you manage the wildlife in a way that ... people can feel safe visiting this place, and yet the wildlife can be to some degree, in some sense, *wild*? It's very tricky.

On encouraging grizzly bears to eat garbage in the mid-20th century

There was a very important superintendent of Yellowstone, a man who was involved in the founding of the National Park Service itself, Horace Albright, and he became superintendent, which is the boss of Yellowstone Park, in 1919 ... to 1929. ...

During that period Albright embraced the idea that in order for the national parks, and Yellowstone in particular, to have support from the American people and from politicians, there needed to be wildlife as spectacle. And for wildlife to be available as spectacle, Horace Albright said wildlife needs to be abundant and tame. So he sanctioned the idea that grizzly bears would be fed handouts from cars and would be allowed to eat garbage, essentially human food garbage, from the various hotels within Yellowstone National Park.

So there were these dumps near the big hotels ... and the food garbage each day was put out there on these dumps and the grizzly bears were allowed, invited essentially, to come and feed at the dumps. At a certain point they decided this was great, this was the bears' show, and they put up stands like bleachers around these natural amphitheaters at the dumpsites.

So people would go out in the 1940s, the 1950s and even in the 1960s, you might finish your dinner at one of the hotels in Yellowstone and then you'd say, "Let's go look at the bear show." And you would go out to the dump, and you would sit in bleachers, and you would watch 12, 15, 18 grizzly bears — adult, dangerous, male, females with cubs — grizzly bears feeding on garbage.

On how closing the dumps in the late '60s, early '70s affected the bears

The grizzly bears were desperate for a few years, searching for substitutes for all this high-calorie human garbage that they had been eating. ... It made it more dangerous for everybody.

Closing the dumps brought on this crisis, and made things more dangerous. So in the years following the closure of the last dump, there was high mortality of grizzly bears. Why? Because they were frantic. ... They were dazed and confused and desperate and hungry. So they came into campgrounds more, they tried to take food off of picnic tables, they tried to take food out of tents. They went places where they shouldn't go and did things that they shouldn't do, and they got in trouble, and quite a number of them got killed, and some people got hurt too.

So in 1975 the grizzly was put on ... the endangered species list as "threatened," and new measures were taken, for instance, bearproofing garbage, creating new regulations to essentially to try and keep people and people's food away from the bears, let the bears adjust to eating the abundant wild food that's available in Yellowstone, and allow them to be more wild, to be independent of humans as sources of food, for the good of both sides. That has

been quite successful.

On how private land development is affecting elk migration

The elk of Yellowstone National Park spend their summers in the high country of Yellowstone, feeding on high grasses that remain green through the summer, but in the winter, those high places become brutally cold, and so the elk move down ... to lower elevation in the surrounding land onto national forests and in some cases onto large private ranches. ...

There are biologists that I talked to in the course of researching this issue who told me, "There are a lot of problems facing the Yellowstone ecosystem, but the one most crucial problem, if you're going to point to one, is private lands development. ...

Private lands development around the [periphery] of the parks, Grand Teton and Yellowstone, is the crucial issue, because if those private lands are transformed from open pastures, meadow, forest land, to suburbs, to little ranchettes, to shopping malls, to roads, to Starbucks, if those places are all settled for the benefit of humans, then the elk are not going to be able to migrate in and out of Yellowstone Park anymore. And if the elk can't migrate into the park, then that creates problems for the wolves, for the grizzlies, for a lot of other creatures.

These things all fit together. The elk are the most abundant large herbivores in the Yellowstone ecosystem; there are thousands and thousands of them; they migrate in and out, and those migration routes need to stay open.

On how Yellowstone was originally thought of as a tourist attraction, not a wildlife refuge

It was the geysers, the thermal features, and the canyon that caused Yellowstone National Park to be created back in 1872. It wasn't even thought of as a wildlife refuge in those days. ... It was thought of as a great tourist attraction. Yellowstone, as I say, is a big idea that has gotten bigger, a good idea that has gotten better. ...

But it's, I think, important to understand the history of Yellowstone, that it wasn't always this great idea. It began as a very commercial idea. The original impetus for creating the national park came largely from minions of the Northern Pacific Railroad who wanted to sell train tickets and hotel rooms to tourists who fancied coming out to see these canyons and geysers. ... People could come out and essentially for free they could see America's greatest, most majestic landscapes in the West. And so it was decided that this would be a public park, or pleasuring ground, for the benefit and enjoyment of the people.

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Zimbabwe's trillion-dollar note: from worthless paper to hot investment

Dominic Frisby
Saturday 14 May 2016

theguardian.com

The central bank of Zimbabwe issued \$100,000,000,000,000 notes during the last days of hyperinflation in 2009, and they barely paid for a loaf of bread. But their value has shot up



The trillion dollar question: inflation in Zimbabwe hit 79.6 billion per cent. Photograph: Tsvangirayi Mukwazhi/AP John (left) and Vishal Wolstencroft sell trillion dollar notes from the defunct Zimbabwean currency to collectors A Zimbabwean lady with a basketful of cash Photograph: Tsvangirayi Mukwazhi/AP

What's been one of the best-performing investments of the past seven years? Shares in Facebook? London property? Bitcoin? Up there with the best, believe it or not, are Zimbabwean 100 trillion dollar notes.

A trillion, by the way, is a million million. There are 12 zeros in a trillion. Add another two to reach the total on the Zimbabwean 100 trillion dollar bill, the note with the most zeroes of any legal tender in all recorded history. The bills circulated for a few months in 2009 at the zenith – or, more precisely, the nadir – of one of the most terrible instances of hyperinflation in history, before Harare finally

abandoned the Zimbabwean dollar in favour of the South African rand, the US dollar and several other foreign currencies.

At one stage a hundred trillion dollar note would not even cover a bus fare. You needed a bale of notes just to buy a few household essentials. However, it's thought that only a few million of them were ever printed.

I remember buying one on eBay. It is on the wall in my office. John Wolstencroft, a private investor, bought a batch of them to give away. "I always found they were a good conversation starter," he says.

In 2010-11, Wolstencroft was living in New Zealand where he joined an investment club, made up mostly of locals and US expats. At the time, the great central banking experiment of quantitative easing and a 0% interest rate policy was making a lot of people nervous. He brought a handful of the Zimbabwean notes along to his first meeting to give out as a way of saying thank you for letting him join the club, but there were more people there than he was expecting.

"I didn't have enough notes to go round," he says. "People started offering me money for them. I tried to explain they were just a gift, but they just upped their offer. I realised then these notes were going to become a collector's item."

Wolstencroft went away and bought several hundred more notes. The price had already risen since his first purchase; they were £1.50 each. He gave some out to members of the club, as promised, and kept the rest. When he returned to Britain he gave some to a financial

He'll be dead soon. Thankfully.

• BuxtonGy AfroCelt

2d ago

Yes, but you still have your beloved Blair. How many did his decisions kill and he runs around like royalty. Furthermore, how many millions have your western warlords and leaders killed around the world? I agree, Mugabe must go, but the animosity towards him in the west is because he acted to reclaim African land from your European brothers. If Mandela had done the same rather than betraying the people, he would be hated as well.

• AfroCelt BuxtonGy

2d ago

Did I say I loved Blair? Who are my European brothers? The invasion of Iraq that you allude to included Albania, Angola, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Georgia, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Mongolia, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Palau, Panama, the Philippines, Portugal, Romania, Rwanda, Singapore, Slovakia, Solomon Islands, South Korea, Tonga, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

And the land you mention actually belongs to the San. The Bantu are invaders too. Including Mugabe who is actually Malawian.

• Richard Randall

3d ago

I remember many years ago when I visited Zimbabwe buying Zim\$ on the street in Bulawayo from ladies who looked like nuns. US\$50 got me two massive bricks of Zim\$100 notes. I seem to remember a beer or a pack of cigs costing about £0.30p each (Over border in SA it was £1+ for them).

• FurioGiunta

3d ago

Why the West hates Mugabe: https://youtu.be/O_liFvNvX-Q

• FurioGiunta FurioGiunta

3d ago

A rare black perspective on a deeply white supremacist matter.

• LorenzoStDubois FurioGiunta

3d ago

No thanks.

• FurioGiunta LorenzoStDubois

3d ago

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John (left) and Vishal Wolstencroft sell trillion dollar notes from the defunct Zimbabwean currency to collectors. A Zimbabwean lady with a basketful of cash. Photograph: Tsvangirayi Mukwazhi/AP

company he works with. "One of the independent financial advisers used to give the notes out to prospective clients to show why they should invest away from cash in a diverse range of assets, such as real estate, gold, stocks and shares," he says. "Over the long term, cash loses its value."

Wolstencroft wasn't alone in seeing the potential of trillion dollar notes. The Wall Street Journal reported in 2011 that David Laties, owner of the Educational Coin Company in New York, had speculated about \$150,000 (£104,000) importing the notes from Zimbabwe, sensing they would become "the best notes ever". Frank Templeton, a retired Wall Street equities trader, bought "quintillions of Zimbabwe dollars" (that's thousands of trillions) for between \$1 and \$2 each, via a broker from the Zimbabwe central bank. He would then sell them on for several times the price.

Vishal Wolstencroft, John's 12-year-old son, noticed late last year that these same 100 trillion dollar notes were now changing hands on eBay for as much as £40 each. He talked his father into a joint venture. Vishal is responsible for the listing, photographs, posting, packing and advertising, while father John supplies the goods. Their profits are shared 50:50. Business is good. According to Vishal, it's quite a step up from his previous venture selling old toys at a local market stall. Most 100 trillion dollar notes fetch close to £20-£25 on eBay, but set against the £1.50 paid by Wolstencroft in 2011 it is a striking return. In percentage terms, it is – close to 1,500%, compared with the miserable 5% rise in the FTSE 100 over the same period.

In an extraordinary irony, the 100 trillion dollar note – a symbol of financial mismanagement on a colossal scale – has turned into one of the best-performing asset classes of recent years.

The disappearing currency



John (left) and Vishal Wolstencroft

When the Zimbabwean dollar first came into existence in 1980 it had a similar value to the US dollar, writes *Patrick Collinson*. But by 2009, \$1 was worth Z\$2,621,984,228, 675,650,147,435,579,309,984,228. The Bank of England worries if inflation in the UK goes over 2% a year; in Zimbabwe it hit 79.6 billion per cent.

The country's central bank could not even afford the paper on which to print its worthless trillion-dollar notes. President Mugabe issued edicts to ban price rises, of comedic value were it not for the devastation that hyperinflation wrought upon the people. The miserably low savings and incomes of the impoverished population were wiped out; shopkeepers would frequently double prices between the morning and afternoon,

sell trillion dollar notes from the defunct Zimbabwean currency to collectors A Zimbabwean lady with a basketful of cash Photograph: Tsvangirayi Mukwazhi/AP

leaving workers' pay almost valueless by the end of the day.

In 2009 the government scrapped the currency, leaving US dollars and South African rand as the main notes and coins in circulation. To this day, Zimbabwe still has no currency of its own, although the government last year offered to swap old deposit accounts into US dollars, giving savers \$5 for each 175 quadrillion (175,000,000,000,000,000) Zimbabwean dollars.

In an extraordinary irony, Zimbabwe now suffers among the world's worst deflation, currently at -2.3%.

comments (202)

- Steve Dutch
5h ago

Cool. I have a two million mark note from Germany, 1923, a 50 billion dinar note from former Yugoslavia, a bunch of Greek drachmas from WWII overprinted with new denominations, and some Chilean escudos from 1973 that I watched helplessly plummet in value with no way to redeem them. I might get one.

- Sam Oldman
6h ago

But this *isn't* the highest denomination note ever.

In 1946 Hungaria issued the Szazmilio B-Pengo... 100,000,000,000,000,000 pengos. That's one hundred QUADRILLION of them. There's an even larger note which was never circulated from that same series.

The more you know.

- MrConservative2016
2d ago

\$5 for each 175 quadrillion (175,000,000,000,000,000) Zimbabwean dollars.

shopkeepers would frequently double prices between the morning and afternoon, leaving workers' pay almost valueless by the end of the day.

But, according to liberal hippies, Mugabe, an black African 'leader' who grabbed all land and property belonging to white Zimbabweans, can do no wrong, can he?

- sbrunel MrConservative2016
2d ago

Yeah, I can't stand those horrid straw men either.

- RegLaCrisp MrConservative2016

1d ago

Are you sure about that? I've not heard a good word about Mugabe in the last 20 or 30 years. (Except from the man himself, of course.)

- Michael Spencer

2d ago

Well done Robert Mugabe. During your reign you have transformed Zimbabwe from one of the richest countries in Africa into an economic basket case and caused untold suffering to the population.

- urugollum

2d ago

Funny story.

Then some interesting comments and proof that in a large group, you can always find someone who has views different to most people. In this case: Mugabe fans.

I clicked just to say the story reminded me of Monty Burns and his 1trillion dollar bill he gave to Fidel (who quit unlike Mugabe).

- epincion

2d ago

I had one of these trillion dollar notes and gave it to a friend - silly me. Seeing the main headline in today's Guardian is about Venezuela which going the same way as Zimbabwe led me to think about what could be that country's future best investment? Probably a roll of Venezuelan toilet paper - but then no doubt the CIA have hoarded them all as a cunning investment strategy at the same time as collapsing the economy!

- Sunscreen

2d ago

I want some to paper my wall

- BuxtonGy

2d ago

If Mugabe had been a western tool like like Museveni or Kagame and had left the Europeans in control of most of the countries arable land, we wouldn't be having this discussion.

- epincion BuxtonGy

2d ago

Actually Zimbabwe today is full of Chinese "advisors" who are attempting to run the farmland Mugabe seized as large collective farms although of course they are

not collectively owned by the peasant farm workers but by the ZANU(PF) elite who take all the profits.

• BuxtonGy epincion
2d ago

But the fact is, if he was a western compliant dictator who left whites alone with their stolen land, we wouldn't be discussing this. I've always found it curious why Australia was at the forefront of condemning Mugabe. Europeans are the kings of land grabs.

• AfroCelt BuxtonGy
2d ago

But the Bantu stole San land.

• LittleRick
3d ago

I'm sure Rhodesia would have suffered the same fate

• waterford LittleRick
3d ago

It was heading that way. It became Zimbabwe when still relatively intact. Hence all those farmers still in situ 20 years later.

• epincion LittleRick
2d ago

Odd that if you visit Zimbabwe today that quite a few will tell you "things were better under Smith"

• BuxtonGy epincion
2d ago

And Iberia was probably better for most under the muslims and Britain under the Romans. You Europeans pretend as though you did not struggle to get where you are today. Your government are not interested in making the transition easier for Africans, Syrians, and Afghans, they just want subjects and resources. The Chinese are to be wary of also.

• KeithTaylor
3d ago

Interesting. I just checked eBay and found that 1 Mongolian Tugrik notes, with a current value of around 1/30th of a penny, sell for a dollar. Obviously there isn't a large enough market for it to be scalable, but it's interesting to see there are people willing to pay

2000 times the value of a note still in circulation. I have a bundle of the things in an old wallet. Might buy me a beer one day :)

- euromelb

3d ago

Yep that is why I have collected all the previous banknotes of EU countries in mint conditions - one day they will be very valuable.

- RegLaCrisp euromelb

3d ago

You really have things like €500 notes, DM1,000 notes, not to mention the umpteen thousand Italian lira notes, tucked away as investments? Good luck to you, but I think you might be waiting a good while to collect a return (even if I, the same you it would seem, believe the euro to be ultimately doomed).

- Tiberman

3d ago

I'd swap a nine bob note for it.

- philo41z

3d ago

In 2004, I worked for an NGO helping road traffic victims claim compensation for their injuries. Our clients were mainly passengers on long distance buses involved in an accident. The law allowed them to claim compensation which many needed given horrific life changing injuries they had sustained. The amounts claimed were astronomical back then. One claim was for 800 000 zim dollars. However because of inflation even this huge amount successfully claimed would not sustain them. Bread cost 30 000 zim dollars back then. I am disappointed by this story it doesn't reflect any real concern for the impact of the awful situation on ordinary people. I am disappointed by conduct of those profiteering from this situation which has devastated many lives in Zimbabwe. If there is any gain to be made it is only proper to send it to a charity in zim as one commentator has pointed out s/he intends to do.

- waterford philo41z

3d ago

It was pretty nice advertising for this man though, wasn't it?

- philo41z waterford

3d ago

It's just such an atrocious situation for the people living it

- Kasuz

3d ago

Frank Templeton, a retired Wall Street equities trader, bought "quintillions of Zimbabwe dollars" (that's thousands of trillions)...

No, a quintillion is a million trillion; a quadrillion is a thousand million.

• waterford Kasuz

3d ago

No

• Kasuz waterford

3d ago

Oh, a quadrillion is a thousand trillion I meant to say...

• Whimsy2015 Kasuz

2d ago

How many is a brazillion?

• orphic_e

3d ago

Yeah, I bought some and now I call myself a billionaire! I also have the habit of making million dollar bets, you should see the disappointment in winners when I payout.

• kimdriver orphic_e

3d ago

I bet the losers are even less happy....

• evidencememe

3d ago

Yes, but what about the 0\$ notes...

• samiamnotaus

3d ago

huh..i bought one back in 2011 as well, to remind myself of the oddities of fiat currencies, it's laminated and on my wall

• chavahrose samiamnotaus

3d ago

LAMINATED? You've destroyed it's value. I laminated my first folio Shakespeare and lived to regret it.

- ID3111798 samiamnotaus

3d ago

All fiat currencies are tax driven - the value of those fiat currencies is generated by governments demanding them for the payment of taxes. If the UK gov suddenly demanded we all pay our taxes in Euros, then Euros would be the thing we were all chasing after.

Zimbabwe had poor tax enforcement and had debts in other currencies that it couldn't produce itself.

All the Euro countries also now have debts in a 'foreign' currency. Inflation isn't a problem because of a solid tax regime, but balance of trade issues are.

- spineynorman

3d ago

I bought a 1923 German Weimar Republic billion mark note for 3 euros last year in Berlin. Historically fascinating; not sure I can use it to retire on though.

- Xlefty spineynorman

5h ago

I found some of those old German notes inside a book I bought at an estate auction about 20 years ago.

- Nick Sophocleous

3d ago

Mugabe is very, very rich: His family and friends all travel the world in first class style, he is also black which seems to give him immunity from white critics who are just shouted down as apologists for colonialism despite the fact that he has siphoned off more money in his reign than the British did in theirs. A charming man who cares for his people as much as I care for him.

- 3d ago

Mugabe took more money than the British? Dude do you desire to be taken seriously in life?

- waterford Nick Sophocleous

3d ago

The British took the country.

- Micha27 waterford

3d ago

If you say it often enough you may just believe it. Mugabe destroyed Zimbabwe but you really just don't want to accept this do you?

- Daveybot

3d ago

Back when the mere 100 billion dollar note was introduced, I bought one on Ebay simply because no one had ever produced such a thing before. I thought it pretty interesting, at least up to a few months later, when it was superseded by the likes of the trillion dollar notes.

...However, the seller also included a ONE dollar note with my purchase, and I still carry that one around in my wallet today.

- dave2207

3d ago

Vote for Corbyn and his cronies - and the UK could suffer a similar fate!

- ThomasPaine2dave2207

3d ago

LOL - you couldn't resist it.

- ChampagnGuardianista

3d ago

Isn't this jeremy corbyns solution to financial problems?

- Bionicflan ChampagnGuardianista

2d ago

2008 banker crash. Libor rate fixing. Quantitative easing. Money laundering. Housing bubbles. Tax evasion. Deaths of benefits claimants. Arms sales.

No one has ever claimed Tories have integrity or honest, by the way.

- Rob Thompson Bionicflan

2d ago

Who was in government in 2008, bet it was them dastardly Tories

- greaterlondon

3d ago

Well done Mugabe. Fine job youve done there.

- 2d ago